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Stan Lee presents

MARVEL AGE®

SALICRUP'S SECTION

Once upon a time, I was meeting a friend for lunch. She worked in an office on Fifth Avenue and I, of course, worked at Marvel's Madison Avenue offices (this was awhile ago, remember?). Just as 575 Madison Avenue was located smack dab between 56th and 57th Streets, so was her office, but on Fifth Avenue, which meant I could go to her office by way of either street. At the time, construction work was taking place on both streets. In fact, everyone in the Bullpen had grown used to the daily explosions which were necessary to break through Manhattan's rockbed to build the huge foundations needed for skyscrapers. That day, I luckily chose the 57th St. route. I was running a little late, so I was somewhat oblivious to what was going on around me during the midday, midtown rush. I didn't pay any attention to the sound of an explosion as I tried to make my way through the crowd. After all, it was just another explosion. Except that it wasn't. It was another New York City phenomenon I actually heard—an exploding manhole lid. Just as I reached the corner of 57th and Fifth, the sewer at 56th and Fifth had decided to blow its top. If I had chosen 56th Street as my route, I probably wouldn't be writing this today—I would've been flattened by that manhole cover.

If you're wondering why I'm telling you about my strange brush with fate, wonder no more! It's just my sneaky way of getting to the New Universe. By now you know that the New Universe is the world outside your window. That doesn't mean it's dull and boring. Strange things do happen. Unbelievable things, sometimes. Our task is to make the fantastic believable. Many of today's finest science fiction authors do it all the time. It's not easy. It requires a lot of extra work, but we're sure the final result will be worth it.

Even in the Marvel Universe, every effort has always been made to make the stories as believable as possible. For example, every time a bystander spots a super hero, it's a big deal! Imagine how you would react if you saw a man burst into flame and then fly up into the sky, or if you spotted a mean green juggernaut smashing everything in its path heading your way. Just look at how people react to celebrities—poor **Madonna** and **Sean Penn** can't go anywhere without the paparazzi on their heels! Someone once commented that Marvel's super heroes have been around New York City for years and sophisticated New Yorkers have probably become blase about the whole deal. Well, perhaps **Jarvis, the Avengers'** butler, or **the Fantastic Four's** doorman **Mr. O'Hoolihan** may have become a bit jaded by now, the way I got used to daily explosions, but the average man or woman on the street—? No way!

Reality in comics is something Marvel has been working on for years. The New Universe represents the next big step! And we mean BIG! Rest assured that the best is yet to come!

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MARVEL COMING ATTRACTIONS

Here is a complete checklist of what's happening in all the Marvel, Epic, Star and New Universe titles bearing a **January** cover date.

A **Limited Series** is a title which will only run for a specific number of issues.

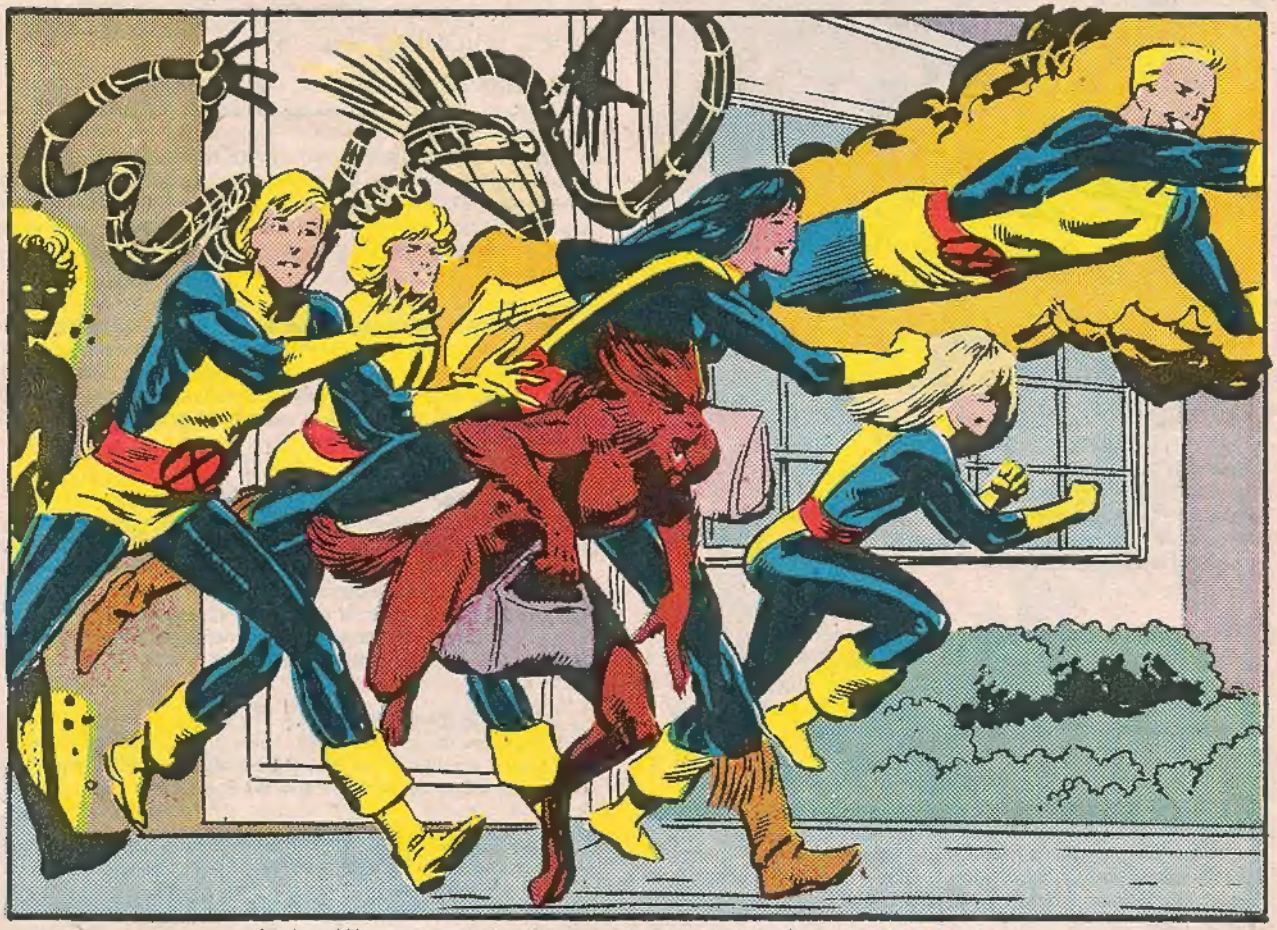
A **Graphic Novel** is an 8½" × 11" paperback edition.

A **Digest** is a 4¾" × 6⅝" paperback-sized edition.

A **Direct Sales** title is available only at selected outlets.

Shipping Date refers to the date the comics leave the printer.

Stan Lee returns to scripting a bi-monthly comic—**DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH!** More debuts than you can shake a stick at! And mutant surprises galore! That's just a hint of all the incredible things in store next month! Don't take a chance of missing out on the fun. Tell your favorite comics shop owner that you want your favorite titles reserved for you right now!



Look out! Here come the New Mutants, with art by Jackson Guice and Kyle Baker!

Titles Shipping Sept. 2
On Sale Sept. 23

☐ **CLOAK AND DAGGER #10**—**Cloak, Dagger** and their friend **Bill Clayton** confront **Doctor Doom** on his home turf of Latveria. Nuclear disarmament, world domination and motherly love are explored in unexpected ways, as the fate of the world is decided in "The Prometheus Principle." Written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Bret Blevins** and inked by **Terry Austin**. 75¢.

☐ **THE NEW MUTANTS #47**—**The New Mutants** begin their most bizarre adventure yet when, in an attempt to escape **Magnus**, they flee on a journey through time and space. "My Heart for the Highlands" is written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Jackson Guice** and inked by **Kyle Baker**. 75¢.

☐ **STRIKE FORCE MORITURI #2**—It's anything but Eden in "The Garden" where the **Morituri** recruits undergo harsh tests designed to develop their powers—or kill them. As that happens, the alien Horde's ravaging of the Earth increases. "The Garden" is written by **Peter B. Gillis**, penciled by **Brent Anderson** and inked by **Scott Williams**. 75¢.

☐ **DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH** #1—**Flash Gordon**, **Mandrake the Magician** and **the Phantom**—the greatest heroes of the newspaper strips team-up to battle the greatest foes of mankind in the comic books! And if you think *that's* momentous, wait until you see who's scripting their adventures—**Stan Lee**! Assisted by **Bob Harras**, penciled by **Alex Saviuk** and inked by **Fred Fredricks**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE** #5—The evil **Skeletor** calls up the gargantuan **Monstroid** to destroy **He-Man**. The even-more-evil **Hordak** tries to seize control of **Monstroid** to destroy them both! But can anyone truly control **Monstroid**? Plus: the amazing **Extendar** and the menacing **Multi-Bot**! Written by **Mike Carlin**, penciled by **Ron Wilson** and inked by **Dennis Janke**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **NIGHT MASK** #3—Adventure in the realm of the mind, as **Keith Remsen** is seduced by **Mistress Twilight**—and his sister **Teddy** is forced to face the unknown without his help! Written by **Archie Goodwin**, penciled by **Tony Salmons** and inked by **Bret Blevins**. A New Universe comic. 75¢.

☐ **PETER PORKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM** #13—**Peter Porker's** fear of monsters throws him between a rock and a haunted place when newspaper publisher **J. Jonah Jackal** orders **Peter** to investigate a haunted house! "Old McDonald's House of Horrors" is written by **Mike Carlin**, penciled by **Joe Albelo** and inked by **Pierre Fournier**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **PSI-FORCE** #3—**Psi-Force** agrees to work for the government, in return for room, board and training! But what the government wants them to do in return is much more than the team is willing to do! Written by **Steve Perry**, penciled by **Mark Texeira**, and inked by **Kyle Baker**. A New Universe comic. 75¢.

☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN** #22—**Spider-Man** in Northern Ireland! With terrorists on one side and the army on the other, it doesn't take much guessing to figure out where **Spider-Man** is! A gut-wrenching Spidey adventure you won't want to miss! "Ireland II" written by **David Michelinie**, penciled by **Marc Silvestri** and inked by **Kyle Baker**. 75¢.

☐ **WEST COAST AVENGERS** #16—A call for help from the original **Yellowjacket** plunges **Hellcat** and **Tigra** into the most shocking rescue mission of their lives in "Reap the Whirlwind." Written by **Steve Englehart**, penciled by **Al Milgrom** and inked by **Joe Sinnott**. 75¢.

☐ **X-MEN ANNUAL** #10—Talk about surprises! Wait until you see what **Mojo** and **Spiral** do to the X-Men! We don't want to let the cat out of the bag, but unless **the New Mutants** can corral **Mojo** and **Spiral**, we're going to have to change the name of this series to **THE X-BABIES**! "Casting Call" is written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Art Adams** and inked by **Terry Austin**. $1.25.

☐ **CONAN THE KING** #38—**Conan** has conquered the kingdom of Nemedia. But **Conan's** plans of revenge against the other monarchs who invaded his kingdom is diverted when he learns that his son, **Prince Taurus**, is still alive! Little does he realize that his search for his son could result in his downfall at "The Crossroads." Written by **Don Kraar**, penciled by **Judith Hunt** and **Mike Manly** and inked by **Art Nichols**. $1.25.

☐ **DAREDEVIL** #238—A psychotic slasher is on the loose, "cleaning up" Hell's Kitchen. It's up to **Daredevil** and **the Black Widow** to stop him—if they can! Written by **Ann Nocenti**, penciled by **Louis Williams** and inked by **Al Williamson**. 75¢.

☐ **MEPHISTO VS. THE FANTASTIC FOUR (Limited Series)** #1—**Mephisto**, Lord of the Netherworld, launches a diabolical quest for revenge against **the Fantastic Four**, using **Reed** and **Sue's** son, **Franklin**! Written by **Al Milgrom** and penciled by **John Buscema**. Direct sales only. Baxter paper. $1.50.

☐ **SWORD OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS** #10—The new ruler of an embattled planet must choose between his code of honor or helping the Swashbucklers stop the dread **Colonizers** from destroying his people. "The Prince" is written by **Bill Mantlo** and drawn by **Geof Isherwood**. An Epic Comic. Direct Sales only. Baxter paper. $1.50.

Titles Shipping Sept. 9
On Sale Sept. 30

☐ **CHUCK NORRIS AND HIS KARATE KOMMANDOES** #1—If you thought his movies were action-packed, wait until you see **Chuck Norris** in this all-new comic book series! This time America's top martial artist and movie hero is back with the incredible **Karate Kommandoes**! Written by **Jo Duffy** and penciled by **Steve Ditko**. A Star Comic. 75¢

☐ **EWOKS** #11—**Princess Kneesaa** gets more than a short shrift of things when the cunning **Fleebogs** shrink her to the size of a pea. That's just the start of trouble for the Ewok princess, because she can't stop shrinking! "The Incredible Shrinking Princess" is written by **Dave Manak**, penciled by **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **G.I. JOE AND THE TRANSFORMERS (Limited Series)** #1—The top two animated action sensations of the eighties are finally together—and wait until you see the story! Assigned to defend a top secret power station, the **G.I. Joe** team faces the most incredible foe of all—the rampaging Decepticons! And when the Joes' own enemy **Cobra** attacks, it turns into a real free-for-all that causes the destruction of one of **the Autobots** greatest members! Written by **Mike Higgins** and penciled by **Herb Trimpe**. 75¢.

☐ **GROO THE WANDERER** #23—The world's clumsiest barbarian is on the loose, doing what he does best—much to the chagrin of his friends and enemies alike! By **Sergio Aragones**, with prestidigitation by **Mark Evanier**. Mando Paper. An Epic Comic. 75¢.

☐ **KICKERS, INC.** #3—When Trace College's assistant football coach got twelve of his friends involved in witchcraft, it was just for fun! But the demon they've unintentionally conjured up is no laughing matter! That's when they call in . . . **Kickers, Inc.** "The Witches of Westchester" is written by **Tom DeFalco**, penciled by **Ron Frenz** and inked by **Sal Buscema**. A New Universe comic. 75¢.

☐ **LABYRINTH** #3—The stunning adaptation of the epic **Jim Henson** fantasy movie starring **David Bowie** concludes. **Sara** finds her baby brother, but how can she get him out of the terrible realm of the trolls alive? Adapted by **Sid Jacobson**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Romeo Tanghal**. 75¢.

☐ **MARK HAZARD: MERC** #3—Terrorism strikes Philadelphia, and only **Marc Hazard—Merc**—can stop disaster! Trouble is, **Merc** is trapped in jail! Written by **Peter David** and drawn by **Gray Morrow**. A New Universe comic. 75¢.

☐ **THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO THE X-MEN #1**—At last, the series you demanded indexed is here—in an all new format! Concise synopses, complete credits and full-page cover illustrations make this the ultimate reference about everyone's favorite mutants! Compiled by **George Olshevsky**. $1.25.

☐ **BOZZ CHRONICLES (Limited Series) #6**—The final issue of the limited series finds **Bozz** and his friends in the heart of a 19th Century African jungle searching for a member of **Bozz's** race who might have a spaceship that can take him home! "King Solomon's Spaceship" is written by **David Michelinie** and drawn by **Bret Blevins**. An Epic Comic. Direct sales only. Baxter paper. For Mature Readers. $1.50.

☐ **THE SPIDER-MAN COMICS MAGAZINE #1**—Because you demanded it—the reprints of **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** continue! Picking up where **MARVEL TALES** left off, this special digest series reprints the titanic **Kingpin** trilogy from **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #s 51, 52 and 53 complete in one volume! Written by **Stan Lee** and drawn by **John Romita, Sr.** $1.50

☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #131**—**Conan's** rescue of an accused witch ensnares him in a bizarre plot of revenge that will not be satisfied until every man in Hyborea is dead! "Autumn of the Witch" is written by **Don Kraar**, penciled by **Mike Docherty** and inked by **Geof Isherwood**. A Marvel magazine. $1.50.

☐ **DRACULA Graphic Novel**—You know the vampire and his incredible evil! Now experience the ultimate in graphic story fear as writer/artist **Jon J Muth** presents a blood-chilling tale of horror that stretches the boundaries of the graphic novel to the limit in a special 80-page tale, "A Symphony in Moonlight and Nightmare." Hudson paper. $6.96.

☐ **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #284**—Where is the Kingpin? His former underlings don't care—they're too busy cutting up his mob realm—and each others' throats! With the **Hobgoblin**, **Jack O'Lantern**, **Silver Sable**, **Hammerhead** and **the Rose** in the thick of things, Spidey's in serious trouble! "Gang War Part 1" is written by **Tom DeFalco**, penciled by **Ron Frenz** and inked by **Brett Breeding**. 75¢.

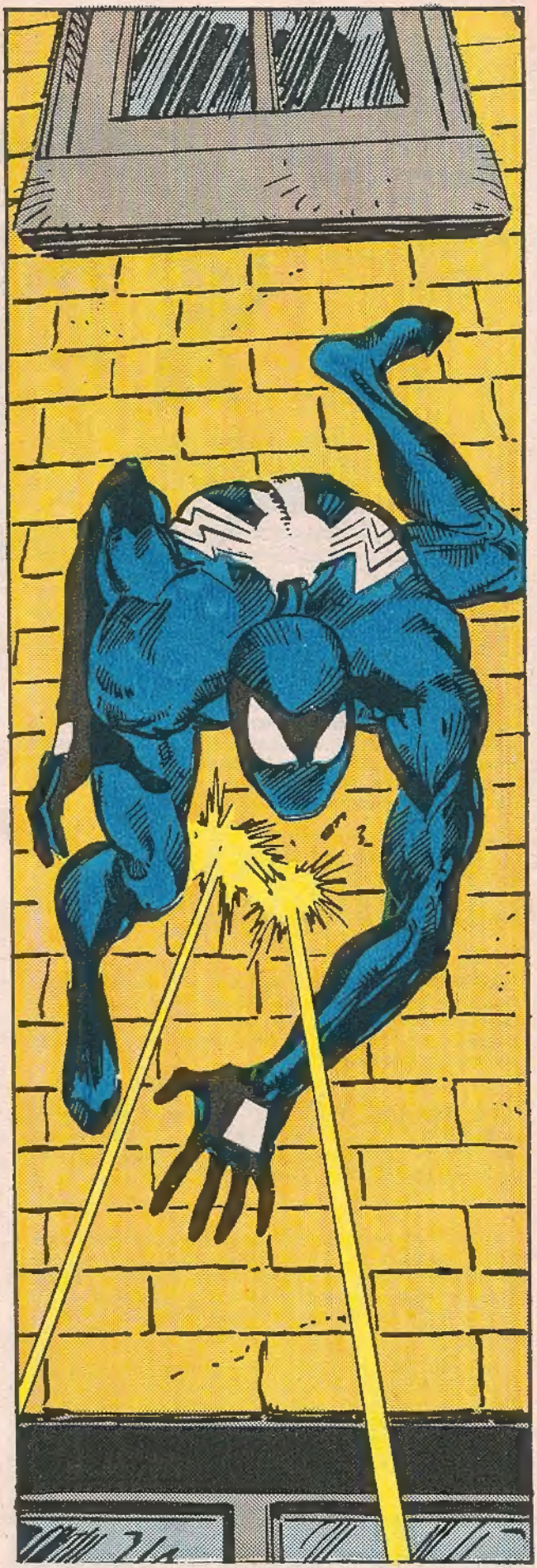
☐ **THE TRANSFORMERS MOVIE (Limited Series) #2**—**The Autobots** crash-land on the planet Quintesson and confront the metal-shearing **Sharkticons**! Will **the Autobots** survive long enough to leave the planet alive? The adaptation of the hit animated movie is written by **Ralph Macchio**, penciled by **Don Perlin** and inked by **Ian Akin** and **Brian Garvey**. 75¢.

☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT #42**—**Bochs** has vowed to free himself from his armor. The trouble is, the separation might just kill him! Meanwhile, **Alpha Flight's** resident mental transmutator is kidnaped and put up for sale to the highest bidder at a bizarre weapons auction. "The Auction" is written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **David Ross** and inked by **Whilce Portacio**. 75¢.

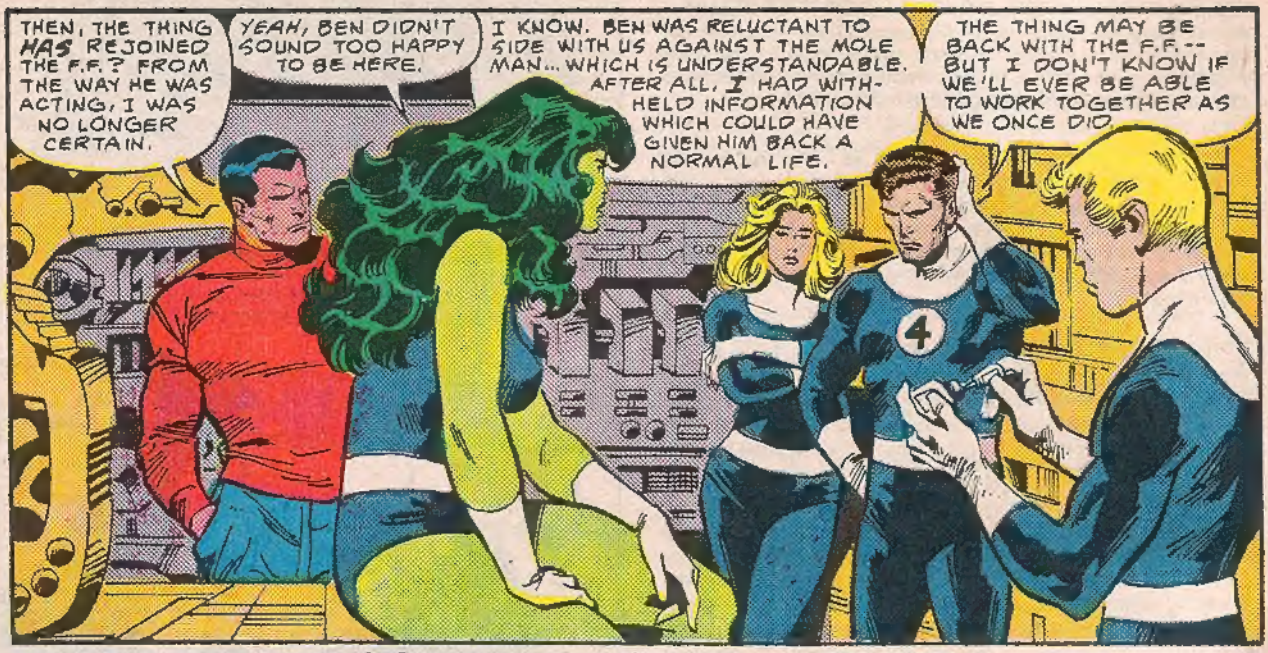
☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #325**—**Captain America's** former sidekick, **Nomad**, returns! And **Captain America** is faced with one of the most difficult decisions of his career when he learns **Nomad** is out to kill Miami's biggest drug dealer, **the Slug**! "Slugfest" is written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Paul Neary** and inked by **John Beatty**. 75¢.

Titles Shipping Sept. 16
On Sale Oct. 7

☐ **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #46**—Special cover story—behind the scenes of the incredible **FANTASTIC FOUR VS. THE X-MEN Limited Series**! Plus: the inside story on how Marvel's blast *to* the past, **COMET MAN**, came about! An action-packed Star Spotlight on **CHUCK NORRIS AND HIS KARATE KOMMANDOS**! Also, your favorite features: Stan's Soapbox, Hembeck's Page, Coming Attractions and more! Direct sales only. 50¢.



Spidey's in deep trouble in this month's WEB OF SPIDER-MAN!


THEN, THE THING HAS REJOINED THE F.F.? FROM THE WAY HE WAS ACTING, I WAS NO LONGER CERTAIN.
YEAH, BEN DIDN'T SOUND TOO HAPPY TO BE HERE.
I KNOW. BEN WAS RELUCTANT TO SIDE WITH US AGAINST THE MOLE MAN... WHICH IS UNDERSTANDABLE. AFTER ALL, I HAD WITHHELD INFORMATION WHICH COULD HAVE GIVEN HIM BACK A NORMAL LIFE.
THE THING MAY BE BACK WITH THE F.F.-- BUT I DON'T KNOW IF WE'LL EVER BE ABLE TO WORK TOGETHER AS WE ONCE DID.

John and Sal Buscema are together again, as the art team on FANTASTIC FOUR!

☐ **THE AVENGERS** #275—It's the **Avengers** last stand when the **Wasp** battles the **Absorbing Man** and **Titania**—alone! "In Deepening Despair" is written by **Roger Stern**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Tom Palmer**. 75¢.

☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN** #190—With anarchy threatening to tear the city-state of El Shah Maddoc apart, only one man has the power to save the city—**Conan**! But Conan doesn't want the city's kingship—he wants revenge! "Exodus" is written by **Jim Owsley**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Ernie Chan**. 75¢.

☐ **D.P. 7** #3—The seven paranormals discover a terrible twist to the old adage "you can't go home again" in "Burning Bridges." Written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Paul Ryan** and inked by **Romeo Tanghal**. A New Universe comic. 75¢.

☐ **HOWARD THE DUCK (Limited Series)** #2—**Howard** learns how he got to Earth, and of the monstrous, evil creature who is keeping him from returning to his home world, in the continuing adaptation of the **George Lucas** film. Written by **Danny Fingeroth** and drawn by **Kyle Baker**. 75¢.

☐ **THE INCREDIBLE HULK** #327—Two **Hulks** are *definitely* worse than one! If you don't believe us now, you will after you read what happens in *this* blockbuster! Written by **Al Milgrom**, penciled by **Steve Geiger** and inked by **Joe Rubinstein**. 75¢.

☐ **JUSTICE** #3—**Justice** meets **Conquest** in a face-to-face battle that's bound to turn heads! And if **Justice** should survive that, he'll still have to take on the Yakuza assassin known only as **Tattoo**! Written by **Archie Goodwin**, penciled by **Geof Isherwood**, and inked by **Joe DeBeato**. A New Universe comic. 75¢.

☐ **MARVEL TALES** #195—The most requested Marvel team-up is re-presented! **Spider-Man** and . . . **the Human Torch**! But do even they have enough power to defeat **the Super Skrull**? Reprinting the classic from **MARVEL TEAM-UP** #61, written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Dave Hunt**. Plus: a brand new five-page backup feature! 75¢.

☐ **MUPPET BABIES** #11—**Muppet *Super*-Babies**? If you think that adventure is wild, wait until you see the second doozie of the issue: **Muppet Baby Vikings**! Written by **Stan Kay** and drawn by **Marie Severin**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK TO THE TRANSFORMERS UNIVERSE** #2— **Autobots, Decepticons, Dinobots, Constructicons, Aerialbots, Insecticons**—the whole kit 'n kaboodle! Everything you ever wanted to know about the most popular robots in America is here in this illustration-packed series written by **Bob Budiansky**. $1.25.

☐ **ELEKTRA: ASSASSIN (Limited Series)** #4—Can a cyborg and an assassin find true love, happiness and peace in a world where everyone is trying to kill them? "Young Love" is written by **Frank Miller** and painted by **Bill Sienkiewicz**. An Epic Comic. Direct Sales only. Hudson paper. For Mature Readers. $1.50.

☐ **MARVEL FANFARE** #30—The unfathomable **Moon Knight** faces his greatest challenge when he discovers that he is trapped by a primal force wielded by an incredible earth elemental in a story so compelling it took the whole issue to tell it! Written by **Ann Nocenti**, penciled by **Brent Anderson** and inked by **Al Williamson**. Hudson paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **G.I. JOE** #55—**Grunt** and **Clutch** face the ultimate test when they are forced to face life without **G.I. Joe**. Written by **Larry Hama**, penciled by **Rod Whigham** and inked by **Andy Mushynsky**. 75¢.

☐ **X-MEN** #213—**Psylocke** is now an **X-Man**, and learns what that means when the X-Mansion is invaded by **Sabretooth**, and she must face him alone! "Psylocke's Debut" is written by **Chris Claremont** and guest-drawn by **Alan Davis**. 75¢.

☐ **THE MARVEL SAGA** #14—This issue of the linear history of the Marvel Universe is loaded with firsts and origins! The origin of, and **Spider-Man's** first battle with, **the Green Goblin**! Also, **Spider-Man** vs. **the Hulk**, the first appearance of **Kraven the Hunter**, and **Spider-Man** and **Daredevil** meet for the first time to battle the nefarious **Ringmaster**. Meanwhile, **the X-Men** confront **the Sub-Mariner**! **The Blob** returns! **The Avengers** face **Kang** for the first time! The origin of **Wonder Man**! The **Fantastic Four** witness the debut of **Diablo**, and **the Red Ghost** returns! **Hawkeye** makes his first appearance! And if you're wondering what's happening in the life of **Thor, Doc Strange** and **Daredevil**, all that is in this volume, too! Written by **Peter Sanderson**. Based on stories by **Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Don Heck, Steve Ditko** and more! $1.00.

☐ **THE 'NAM** #2—The reality of life and battle in the bases and jungles of Vietnam as seen through the eyes of **Pfc. Marks** and his platoon reveals heroism and cowardice, and the corruption that protects the cowards! "Dust Off" is written by **Doug Murray**, penciled by **Mike Golden** and inked by **Armando Gil**. 75¢.

Titles Shipping Sept. 23
On Sale Oct. 14

☐ **CARE BEARS** #8—In the sad town of Woe, disaster strikes when the most famous unknown inventor in the world causes huge chunks of Woe to vanish! It's **the Care Bears** to the rescue to show what caring can do even for the most troublesome person. "The Disappearing Town" is written by **Stan Kay**, penciled by **Howard Post** and inked by **Roberta Edelman**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **ELFQUEST** #18—The lethal plot of **Winnowill** threatens the lives of **Cutter's** children, and might end **the Elves' quest**! Written by **Wendy** and **Richard Pini**, and drawn by **Wendy Pini**. An Epic Comic. Mando paper. 75¢.

☐ **THOR** #375—Can a broken arm stop **Thor**? It might, thanks to **Hela's** curse and **Loki's** rebellion! When high technology and the **Thunder God** collide with base wizardry and merciless foes—watch out! Written by **Walt Simonson** and drawn by **Sal Buscema**. 75¢.

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR** #298—It's brother against brother, and the **Fantastic Four** against the unstoppable **Umbra** in this all-out action issue! Wait until you see the shocking finale! Written by **Roger Stern**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Sal Buscema**. 75¢.

☐ **THE INHUMANOIDS** #1—A huge prehistoric monster encased in amber is discovered in the Big Sur Forest and put on display at the Shore Museum in San Francisco! But then **the Inhumanoid** monster known as **Tendril** tears through the streets of San Francisco determined to set his imprisoned comrade free! Can **Herc Armstrong**, **Auger**, **Liquidator**, and **Dr. Bright**—four highly skilled and specially trained scientists known as **Earth Corps**—stop **Tendril** before it's too late? Find out in the first collectors' item issue! Based on the exciting new animated series. "The Coming of The Inhumanoids!" is scripted by **Jim Salicrup**, penciled by **James Fry**, and inked by **Joe Del Beato**. A Star Comic, 75¢.

☐ **STEELGRIP STARKEY (Limited Series)** #5—**Steelgrip Starkey** and his arch-rival, **Ironarm Gantry**, compete in a globe-spanning contest to see who is best! But what is the *real* prize? "Steel-Drivin' Man" is written by **Alan Weiss**, penciled by **Val Mayerik** and inked by **Jim Sherman**. An Epic Comic. Direct sales only. Baxter paper. $1.50.

☐ **PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN** #212—**Spidey** meets the ultimate in cool! Check out what happens when our web-slinging wonder teams up with **Dakota North**! Written by **Peter David** and penciled by **Mark Beachum**. 75¢.

☐ **SPITFIRE AND THE TROUBLESHOOTERS** #4—When a middle eastern terrorist called **Steelhawk** decides to steal the MACS-2 armor, the safety of the free world is at stake! Can **Jenny Swensen** and her **Troubleshooters** stop him? Written by **Gerry Conway**, penciled by **Herb Trimpe** and inked by **Joe Sinnott**. A New Universe Comic. 75¢.

☐ **X-FACTOR** #12—When **the X-Factor** receive a call for help, why do they attack the victim instead of the assailant? Because the victim is **Boom-Boom**, last seen in **SECRET WARS II**! Plus: **Angel's** fate takes a horrible turn for the worse. And as if that weren't enough, **X-Factor** learn that their loved ones are now on the mutant-haters hit list! Written by **Louise Simonson**, penciled by **Marc Silvestri** and inked by **Bob Wiacek**. 75¢.

☐ **THE TRANSFORMERS** #24—**Optimus Prime** and **Megatron** interface with a video game where the stakes are winner-take-all and the loser takes death! And introducing: the **Protectobots** and **Combaticons**! Written by **Bob Budiansky**, penciled by **Don Perlin** and inked by **Ian Akin** and **Brian Garvey**. 75¢.

☐ **THE TRANSFORMERS COMIC MAGAZINE** #1—A new format and new fun for new and old **Transformers** fans alike can be found in this digest series that chronologically re-presents the adventures of the most popular robots in America. Who were the first **Transformers** and how did they get to Earth? The amazing facts are here in the reprints of TRANSFORMERS #s 1 and 2 plotted by **Bill Mantlo**, scripted by **Ralph Macchio** and **Jim Salicrup**, penciled by **Frank Springer** and inked by **Kim DeMulder**. 64 pages. $1.50.

☐ **IRON MAN** #214—This pulse-pounding tie-in with this year's **Avengers Annual** finds **Spider-woman** stalked by a trio of high-tech bounty hunters. Will **Iron Man** reach her before it's too late? Written by **Danny Fingeroth** and drawn by **Tom Morgan**. 75¢.

☐ **THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE HANDBOOK (Trade paperback)** #1—The ultimate reference to the Marvel Universe just got better! This special, sturdy format series for fans who want to know everything about the heroes and villains of the Marvel Universe kicks off with the first three issues of THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE HANDBOOK between its covers. Written by **Peter Sanderson** and **Mark Gruenwald**. $6.95.

☐ **CLASSIC X-MEN** #5—**The X-Men** are torn by the terrible consequences of betrayal in the re-presentation of the adventure from **X-MEN** #97, "My Brother My Enemy." Written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Dave Cockrum** and inked by **Sam Grainger**. Plus: a special 10-page tie-in tale written by **Chris Claremont** and drawn by **John Bolton**. 32 pages. $1.00.

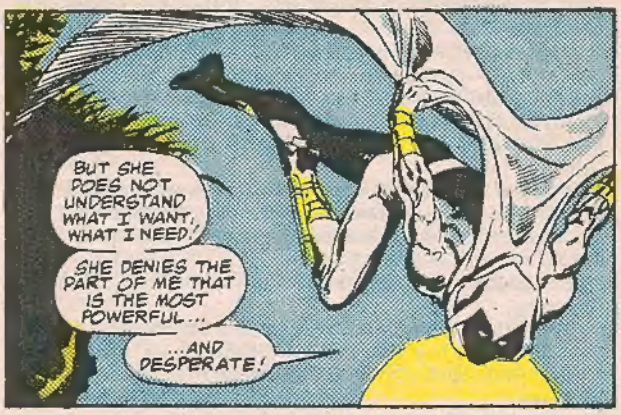
☐ **THE OFFICIAL HANDOOK OF THE G.I. JOE UNIVERSE** #3—Every **Joe** and enemy **the Joes** have faced is here in the ultimate reference series on America's greatest anti-terrorist strike force! Facts, figures, history and illustrations are jam-packed into every page! Researched by **Fred Foster** and written by **Larry Hama**. $1.25.

☐ **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION** #14—Heroes, villains, weapons and equipment—all the facts and history . . . literally everything you ever wanted to know about the characters in the Marvel Universe! Written by **Peter Sanderson** and **Mark Gruenwald**. Drawn by Marvel's top artists all inked by **Joe Rubinstein**. 64 pages. $1.50.

☐ **STAR BRAND** #4—When **Star Brand** encounters three super powered paranormals, the result can only be combat! Written by **Jim Shooter**, penciled by **John Romita, Jr.** and inked by **Al Williamson**. A New Universe comic. 75¢.

☐ **SAVAGE TALES** #8—Marvel's gritty and graphic action anthology presents part 3 of "Skull Hunter" written by **John Arcudi** and drawn by **Vincent Waller**; writer **Chuck Dixon** and artist **John Severin** unfold "The Long Ride Home," a tale of the Old West; writer/artist **Sam Glanzman** tells a gripping tale of the navy in World War II! All this tough stuff and more! Cover by **Bob Camp**. A Marvel magazine. $1.50.

Moon Knight is back—in MARVEL FANFARE!



MORE COMING ATTRACTIONS

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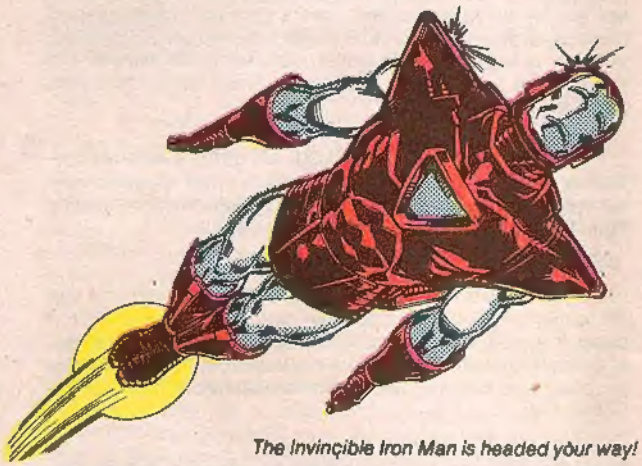
Titles Shipping **October**

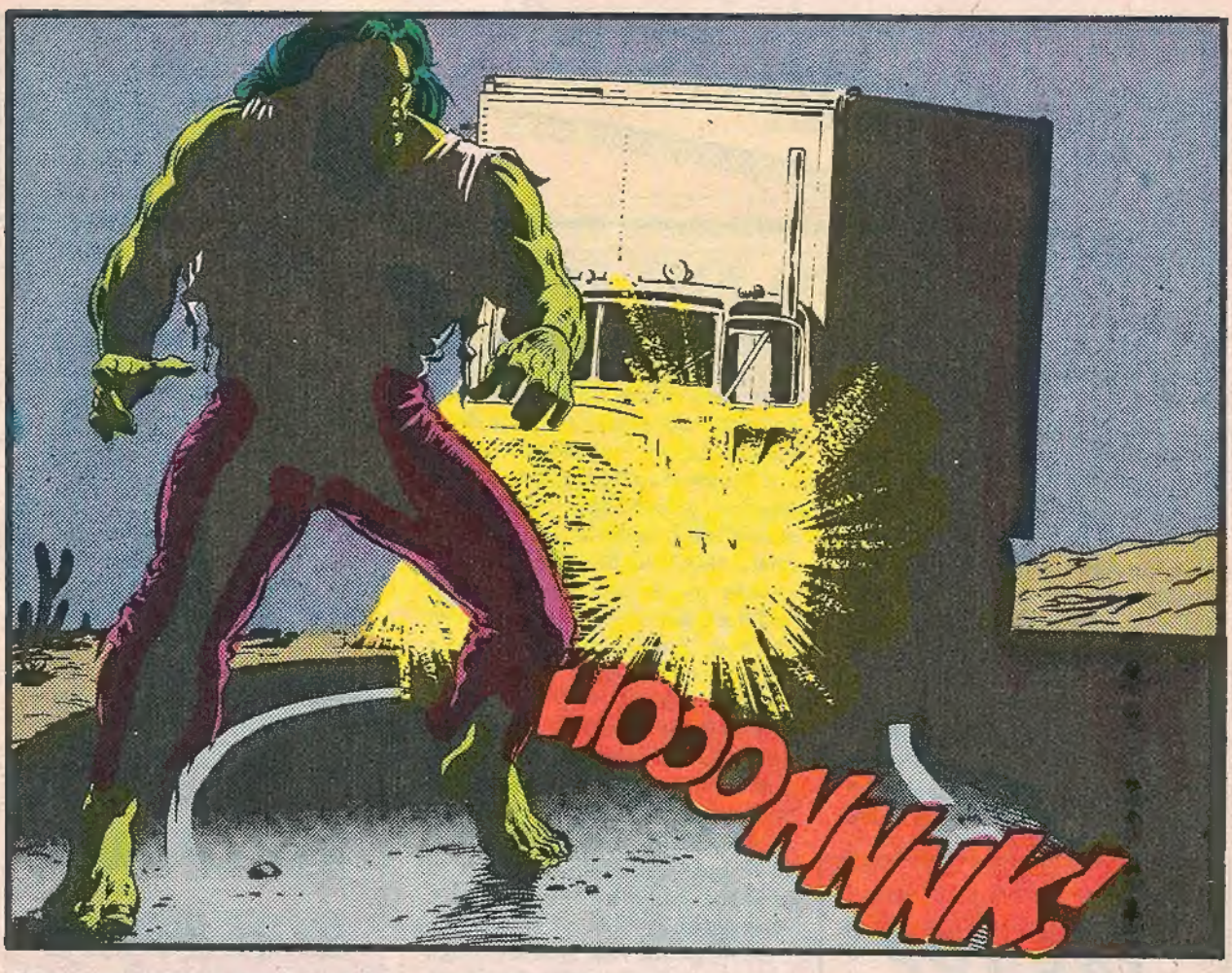
COMET MAN #1—by Mumy, Ferer and Jones.
DAKOTA NORTH #5—by Thomases and Salmons.
DAREDEVIL #239
G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS #3—by Hama and Trimpe.
HUGGA BUNCH #3—by Kay, Coleman and Roettcher.
STRIKE FORCE MORITURI #3—by Gillis, Anderson and Williams.
THE NEW MUTANTS #48—by Claremont, Guice and Baker.
NIGHT MASK #4—by Goodwin and Salmons.
PSI-FORCE #4—by Perry, Texeira and Baker.
THUNDERCATS #8—by Conway, Delbo and Sinnott.
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #23—by Michelinie, Silvestri and Baker.
WEST COAST AVENGERS #17—by Englehart, Milgrom and Sinnott.
CONAN ANNUAL #10—by Owsley and Chan.
MEPHISTO VS. X-FACTOR #2—by Milgrom and J. Buscema.
MOONSHADOW #11—by DeMatteis and Muth.
THE TRANSFORMERS MOVIE #3—by Macchio, Perlin, Akin and Garvey.
ALPHA FLIGHT #43—by Mantlo, Rose and Portacio.
ANIMAX #2—by W. Simonson, Purcell and Beatty.
CAPTAIN AMERICA #326—by Gruenwald, Nefary and Beatty.
DOCTOR STRANGE #81—by Gillis, Warner and Emberlin.
G.I. JOE AND THE TRANSFORMERS #2—by Higgins and Trimpe.
GROO THE WANDERER #24—by Aragones with Evanier.
HEATHCLIFF #14—by DeCesare, Kremer and Roettcher.
KICKERS, INC. #4—by DeFalco, Frenz and S. Buscema.
MERC #4—by David and Morrow.
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #285—by DeFalco, Frenz and Breeding.
POWER PACK #28—by L. Simonson and Bogdanove.
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #1—compiled by Olshevsky.
THE FANTASTIC FOUR VS. THE X-MEN #1—by Claremont, Bogdanove and Austin.
SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #132—by Yakata and Kwapisz.
THE STAR COMICS MAGAZINE #2
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #47
THE AVENGERS #276—by Stern, J. Buscema and Palmer.
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #191—by Owsley, Semeiks and Chan.
D.P. 7 #4—by Gruenwald, Ryan and Tanghal.
G.I. JOE #56—by Hama, Whigham and Mushynsky.
HOWARD THE DUCK THE MOVIE #3—by Fingeroth and Baker.
THE INCREDIBLE HULK #328—by Milgrom, Geiger and Rubinstein.
JUSTICE #4
MARVEL TALES #196—by Claremont, Byrne and Hunt.
THE 'NAM #3—by Murray, Golden and Gil.
X-MEN #214—by Claremont and Davis.
THE MARVEL SAGA #15—by Sanderson.
THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE TRANSFORMERS UNIVERSE #3—written by Budiansky.
ELEKTRA: ASSASSIN #5—by Miller and Sienkiewicz.
SPIDER-MAN VS. WOLVERINE #1—by Owsley and Bright.
THE ALIEN LEGION Graphic Novel—by Zelenetz, Cirocco and Austin.
DROIDS #6—by Manak, Romita, Sr. and Williamson.
ELFQUEST #19—by W. and R. Pini.
FANTASTIC FOUR #299—by Stern, J. and S. Buscema.
IRON MAN #215—by Michelinie, Bright and Layton.
PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #123—by David, Buckler and McLeod.
POPPLES #2—by Kay, Costanza and Roettcher.
SPITFIRE AND THE TROUBLE-SHOOTERS #5—by Conway and Trimpe.
STAR BRAND #5—by Shooter and Romita, Jr.
TOP DOG #12—by Manak, Kremer and D'Agostino.
THE TRANSFORMERS #25—by Budiansky, Perlin, Akin and Garvey.
X-FACTOR #13—by L. Simonson, W. Simonson and Wiacek.
CLASSIC X-MEN #6—by Claremont, Cockrum and Bolton.
THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE G.I. JOE UNIVERSE #4—by Hama and Foster.
ALIEN LEGION #17—by Zelenetz, Stroman and Emberlin.
THE G.I. JOE COMICS MAGAZINE #2—by Hama and Trimpe.
THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION #15—by Sanderson and Gruenwald.
STEELGRIP STARKEY #6—by Weiss and Sherman.



The Invincible Iron Man is headed your way!

Titles Shipping **November**

COMET MAN #2—by Mumy, Ferer and Jones.
DAREDEVIL #240
DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH #2—by Lee, Harras, Saviuk and Fredericks.
MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE #6—by Carlin, Wilson and Janke.
STRIKE FORCE MORITURI #4—by Gillis, Anderson and Williams.
THE NEW MUTANTS #49—by Claremont, Guice and Baker.



What is the secret of the second Hulk? Find out—in the pages of THE INCREDIBLE HULK!

NIGHT MASK #5—by **Goodwin** and **Salmone.**
PETER PORKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #14—by **Mellor** and **Albelo.**
PSI-FORCE #5—by **Perry, Texeira** and **Baker.**
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #24—by **Michelinie, Silvestri** and **Baker.**
WEST COAST AVENGERS #18—by **Englehart, Milgrom** and **Sinnott.**
CLOAK AND DAGGER #11—by **Mantlo. Leonardi** and **Austin.**
CONAN THE KING #39—by **Kraar, Hunt** and **Nichols.**
G.I. JOE YEARBOOK #3—by **Hama, Wagner** and **M. Severin.**
MEPHISTO VS. THE X-MEN #3—by **Milgrom** and **J. Buscema.**
SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS #11—by **Mantlo** and **Doran.**
ALPHA FLIGHT #44—by **Mantlo, Rose** and **Portacio.**
CAPTAIN AMERICA #327—by **Gruenwald, Neary** and **Beatty.**
CHUCK NORRIS AND HIS KARATE KOMMANDOS #2—by **Duffy** and **Ditko.**
EWOKS #12—by **Manak, Kremer** and **Roettcher.**
G.I. JOE AND THE TRANSFORMERS #3—by **Higgins** and **Trimpe.**
GROO THE WANDERER #25—by **Aragones** with **Evanier.**
KICKERS, INC. #5—by **DeFalco, Frenz** and **S. Buscema.**
MERC #5—by **David** and **Morrow.**
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #286—by **DeFalco, Frenz** and **Breeding.**
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO THE X-MEN #2—compiled by **Olshevsky.**
THE FANTASTIC FOUR VS. THE X-MEN #2—by **Claremont, Bogdanove** and **Austin.**
THE SPIDER-MAN COMICS MAGAZINE #2—by **Lee** and **Romita, Sr.**
SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #133—by **Yakata** and **Kubert.**
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #48
THE AVENGERS #277—by **Stern, J. Buscema** and **Palmer.**
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #192—by **Owsley, Semeiks** and **Chan.**
D.P. 7 #5—by **Gruenwald, Ryan** and **Tanghal.**
G.I. JOE #57—by **Hama, Whigham** and **Mushynsky.**
THE INCREDIBLE HULK #329—by **Milgrom, Geiger** and **Rubinstein.**
JUSTICE #5
MARVEL TALES #197—by **Claremont, Byrne** and **Hunt.**
MUPPET BABIES #12—by **Kay** and **Severin.**
THE NAM #4—by **Murray, Golden** and **Gil.**
X-MEN #215—by **Claremont** and **Smith.**
THE MARVEL SAGA #16—by **Sanderson**
THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE TRANSFORMERS UNIVERSE #4—by **Budiansky.**
ELEKTRA: ASSASSIN #6—by **Miller** and **Sienkiewicz.**
MARVEL FANFARE #31
CARE BEARS #9—by **Hitchcock, Post** and **Edelman.**
ELFQUEST #20—by **W.** and **R. Pini.**
THE INHUMANOIDS #2—by **Sallcrup, Fry** and **Del Beato.**
IRON MAN #216—by **Michelinie, Bright** and **Layton.**
PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #124
SPITFIRE AND THE TROUBLE-SHOOTERS #6—by **Conway** and **Trimpe.**
STAR BRAND #6—by **Shooter** and **Romita, Jr.**
THOR #377—by **W. Simonson** and **S. Buscema.**
THE TRANSFORMERS #26—by **Budiansky, Perlin, Akin** and **Garvey.**
X-FACTOR #14—by **L. Simonson, W. Simonson** and **Wiacek.**
CLASSIC X-MEN #7—by **Claremont, Cockrum** and **Bolton.**
FANTASTIC FOUR #300—by **Stern, J.** and **S. Buscema.**
SAVAGE TALES #9
THE TRANSFORMERS COMICS MAGAZINE #2—by **Sallcrup** and **Springer.**
CONAN Graphic Novel—"Conan the Reaver" by **Kraar** and **J. Severin.**
THE MARVEL UNIVERSE HANDBOOK Trade Paperback #2—by **Sanderson** and **Gruenwald.**

NEWSWATCH

Digest delights, a Marvel Comic grab-bag for PBS and more Marvel Editors on the move!

ITEM: What's got 64 pages, is packed with action and adventure and is loaded with fun? If you answered "the new Marvel digests," then you've already peeked at this month's Coming Attractions. Even as you read this some of the first issues of Marvel's new digest-sized comics magazines are already on sale! The digest line consists of THE SPIDER-MAN COMICS MAGAZINE, THE G.I. JOE COMICS MAGAZINE, THE TRANSFORMERS COMICS MAGAZINE and the STAR COMICS MAGAZINE. The **G.I. Joe** and **Transformers** digests feature the chronological reprinting of their adventures starting from the very first issue and also includes selected pages from their respective HANDBOOK series. The **Spider-Man** digest picks up in the reprinting of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN stories where MARVEL TALES left off (that's AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #51, in case you thought we'd forgotten). And the Star Comics digest will be an anthology magazine featuring a collection of the best stories from EWOKS, DROIDS, TOP DOG, MUPPET BABIES, HEATHCLIFF and the rest of the Star line-up!

Not only that, but the digest line will be distributed through supermarkets, as well as on newsstands and in comics shops! Once again, Marvel is reaching out to new readers everywhere!

So for all you new fans who might have missed out the first time around, and even for you old fans who might have passed some of these stories by, now's your chance to see what made these series so popular!

ITEM: Not too long ago, Public Broadcasting Stations all across the country were auctioning off Marvel Graphic Novels, portfolios and posters as part of their recent fund-raising efforts. As a part of Marvel's commitment to PBS, Marvel contributed a whole grab-bag of goodies to PBS stations everywhere, not only to help them raise money, but also to increase everybody's awareness of comics. If you were one of the few who missed out on your opportunity to support your local PBS station by bidding for a Marvel product, stay tuned! You might get your chance before you know it!

ITEM: Long-time Bullpen watchers will be happy to see that Assistant Editor **Don Daley** has just been promoted to full Editor and is now the guiding force behind the FANTASTIC FOUR, CAPTAIN AMERICA, ANIMAX, THE TRANSFORMERS and a couple of new projects you'll be seeing soon. Helping him out for the summer as his Assistant Editor is long-time aide on MARVEL UNIVERSE, **David Wohl**.

Taking Don's place as assistant to Editor **Bob Harras** is Assistant Editor **Bobbie Chase**, who has also been assigned to edit the new digest comic, G.I. JOE COMICS MAGAZINE.

Meanwhile, over at Star Comics, Editor **Sid Jacobson** announced that he has a new Assistant Editor as well. She's **Laura Hitchcock**, and already she's found herself up to her ears in **Ewoks**!

Congratulations to everyone! And now, on with the rest of the magazine!

THE TOP TEN

It's time once again for the Marvel Top Ten! It's a listing of the ten best selling direct sales titles, as provided for us by our bestest Director of Specialty Sales, **Carol Kalish**. This time we'll look at the ten test for June, 1986.

1—**G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS #1**
2—**X-MEN #210**
3—**CLASSIC X-MEN #2**
4—**X-FACTOR #9**
5—**ELEKTRA ASSASSIN #1**
6—**X-FACTOR ANNUAL #1**
7—**STAR BRAND #1**
8—**SPITFIRE #1**
9—**INCREDIBLE HULK AND WOLVERINE #1**
10—**MARVEL UNIVERSE #11**

The summer's here, school's out, and everybody and their uncles are out in the sun, reading the latest Marvels! Sounds like fun!—*A.P.*

BULLPEN BIRTHDAYS

September 2	**Walt Simonson**
September 3	**Pat Redding, Shelly Fisch**
September 4	**Paul Smith, Kenny Lopez, Rosemary McCormick-Lowy**
September 6	**Mike Zeck**
September 8	**Archie Goodwin**
September 11	**Rod Whigham**
September 13	**Lynn Cohen**
September 14	**Jim Novak**
September 16	**Keith Williams, Kurt Busiek, Brenda Mings**
September 17	**Roger Stern, Danny Fingeroth**
September 19	**Brian Garvey, Cynthia Martin**
September 20	**Doug Hazlewood**
September 23	**Peter David**
September 24	**Bill Valley**
September 25	**Bob Layton Dawn Geiger**
September 26	**Louise Simonson,**
September 27	**Jim Shooter, Bob Sharen**
September 30	**Ken Feduniewic.**

X-TRA THE MUTANT REPORT X-TRA

VOLUME 2 "THE NEXT STEP IN NEWS EVOLUTION" NUMBER 4

ANNOUNCING THE OFFICIAL MARVEL INDEX TO THE UNCANNY X-MEN®

Twenty-five years of action, adventure, and wonderful plot twists have gone into what we today call "The Marvel Universe." And mutants have figured prominently in that twenty-five year history. Just look at the frequency with which they keep popping up in Marvel's historical and reference works such as MARVEL SAGA and MARVEL UNIVERSE. Take, for example, everyone's favorite group of merry mutants, THE UNCANNY X-MEN. Their exciting stories didn't begin with this month's fantastic issue. They didn't even start with GIANT-SIZED X-MEN #1. No, there's a deep, rich history that goes back almost to the very beginning of the Marvel Age of Comics. And since many of you weren't even born back then, it's almost a sure bet that you're missing one or two of those early issues and there may even be gaping holes in your collections. But for you to go out and buy those classics—if you could even find them—it would cost you a small fortune Maybe not so small.

But we've come up with a way for you to relive those timeless tales, to experience the great stories you may have missed. Next month, we'll be introducing THE OFFICIAL MARVEL INDEX TO THE X-MEN. Like the other books in the index series, THE X-MEN INDEX will act as a time machine to take you back to the very beginnings of the team that are now at the very top of comic popularity.

Edited by Mike Higgins and compiled by George Olshevsky, THE X-MEN INDEX is packed full of characters, color cover reproductions, and creator credits for those early issues. And beginning with THE X-MEN INDEX and carrying over to the other titles in the series, the INDEX BOOKS will be going bi-monthly to allow more time to gather up all those important facts and write the issue summaries.

"Starting with THE X-MEN INDEX, we'll be making the index books more visually appealing," explained Mike. "We're excited about the changes we're making. Because it would cost a fortune to go out and buy the original issues we'll be talking about, we want to give the readers the feeling they originally inspired."

To accomplish this, THE X-MEN INDEX will cut back on the number of recaps each issue and will contain more art from those long-ago days. "Beginning with THE X-MEN INDEX, the index books will have full-page color reproductions of the original covers. And we're cutting down on the text and using more spot illustrations," said Mike.

The new format will cover 15 comics per issue, devoting two pages to every summary. If you're new to the index books, then you'll be in for a treat when you pick up THE OFFICIAL INDEX TO THE X-MEN #1. Inside you'll find an exciting splash page that will consist of new and different material. Then flip the page and you'll relive history!

"THE X-MEN INDEX contains a complete listing of the creator credits of each issue. Starting with X-MEN #1, you'll be able to find out who wrote, drew, inked, colored, and edited the classic comics," explained Mike. "The index method is economical and time saving, too. You get years worth of comics that are not readily available at a glance. And we've trimmed the actual summaries, making them more concise, faster, and livelier to read." The summaries are actual recaps of all the important events that took place in each issue. Starting with the historic X-MEN #1, you can relive the stories that introduced Professor Charles Xavier and his very special students to the world. Read all about those early adventures that showcased Cyclops, Marvel Girl, Angel, Iceman, and the Beast.

The first issue will also feature a neat wrap-around cover penciled by Sandy Plunkett and inked by Craig Russell. "The cover is a step aside from the Marvel norm, and that's what we'll be trying to instill as a standard in the index books," said Mike. "And wait'll you see what we have planned for the splash pages!"

THE X-MEN INDEX, like the other index books, is part of the gala 25th Anniversary of Marvel Comics. It will be part of the other related works that will become a reference library of Marvel Comics. "We're filling it with as much fascinating information as possible," said Mike. "We're real excited about THE X-MEN INDEX."

X-cited? X-Men? Ind-X? We see a definite X-pattern developing X-here . . .

—*Bill Slavicsek*

THE ATTENTION, THE ACCLAIM THE ULTIMATE SELF-SACRIFICE

'WE WHO ARE ABOUT TO DIE'

Strikeforce: MORITURI™

Picture yourself in the Earth of the near future, roughly the middle of the next century. The planet has been invaded by a race of marauding space-faring nomads who have settled in the Southern Hemisphere and are callously milking Earth dry. Only when they have totally exploited everything of worth will they leave. All previous attempts to defeat and eject the aliens have been failures. For five years the aliens have been almost effortlessly taking what they want, when they want it. Mankind's future seems hopeless.

Then, astonishingly, a super-powered team of champions appears, and in a heroic self-sacrificing battle delivers the aliens their first major defeat!

Through the news, you discover that these super heroes were once normal people, just like you; except they underwent a special treatment which gave them incredible abilities. Most astonishing of all, you discover that you, too, can join the elite ranks of the super heroes! The fame and glory that is theirs can also be yours!

But there is a price for such a decision, and that price is your life. Twelve months after you receive the treatment and acquire your super powers, you will die. But before that happens, you will know that you will be one of the few who possess the power to help save Earth. Also, you will receive attention and acclaim greater than that of the most famous film star.

This is a choice available to everyone under 35 years of age: to continue as before, living a normal, perhaps long, life with the chance that you might become rich or famous, or to choose to die young, heroically, with your name forever etched in the annals of human history as a member of **Strike Force: Morituri**.

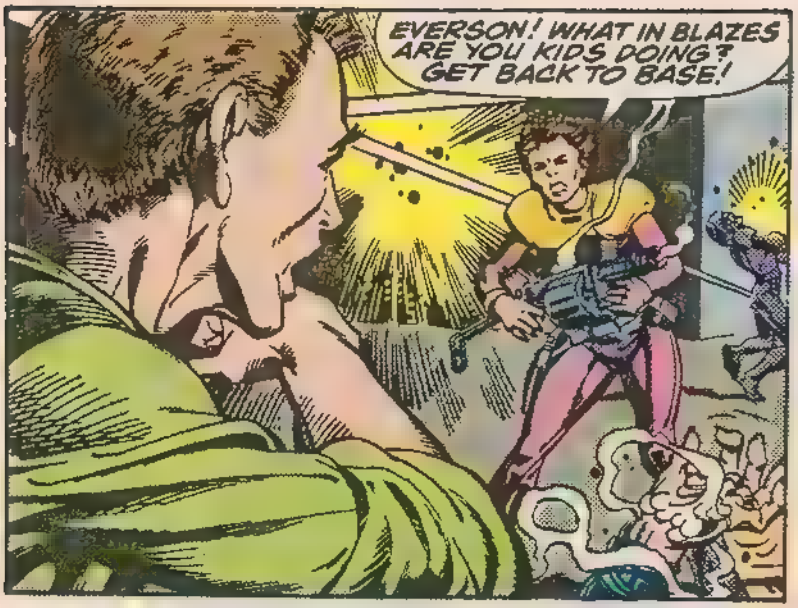
What would you choose?

For **Jelene Anderson**, **Harold C. Everson** and **Aline Pagrovna**, the choice was clear. When the chance came for them to become members of the Morituri, they took it.

Harold is a writer and a born leader. His plan is to achieve literary immortality by chronicling his first-hand experiences as one of the Morituri. But when more and more of his rapidly vanishing time is consumed by the demands of the Morituri, his greatest battle will begin.

Jelene Anderson doesn't fear death. Her religious faith is so strong that she is convinced that the Morituri and her role in it is an act of Divine Will. Her faith, so simple in its belief and so unshakable, will be tested in ways not even she anticipated.

As for Aline, what becomes of her is almost a fairy tale. Mousy, and believing her life would be just one long gray mass of loneliness, she opts for the short life of a famous hero. The result is beyond her wildest dreams. Suddenly she is not only famous, but so

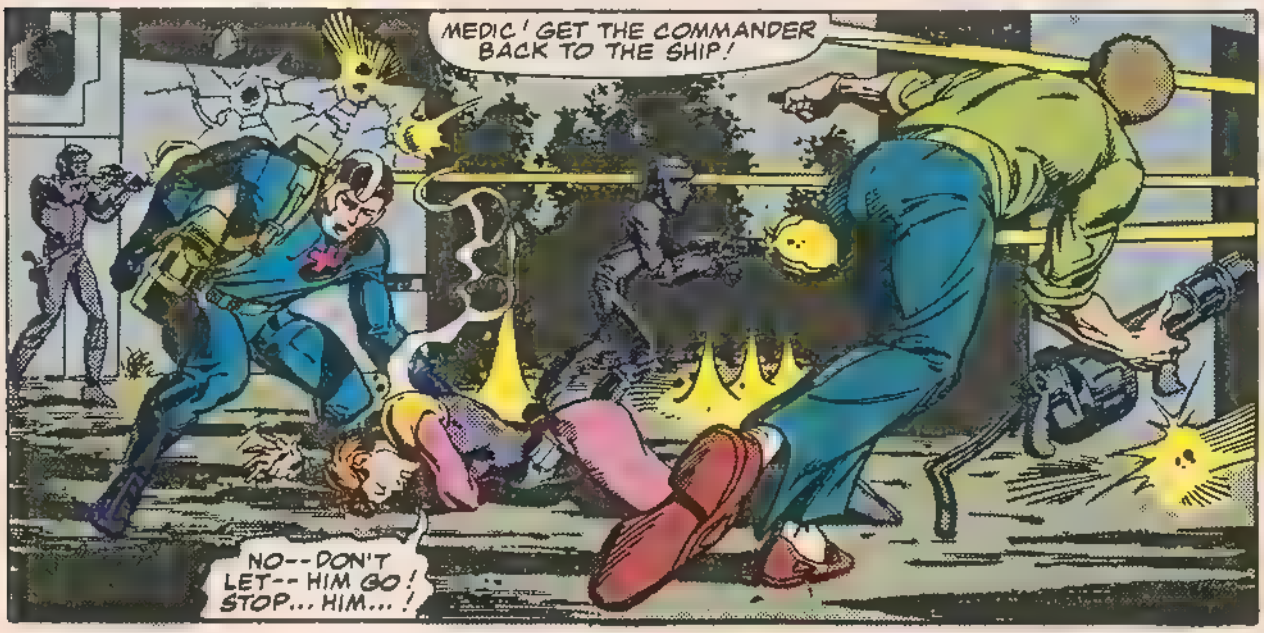


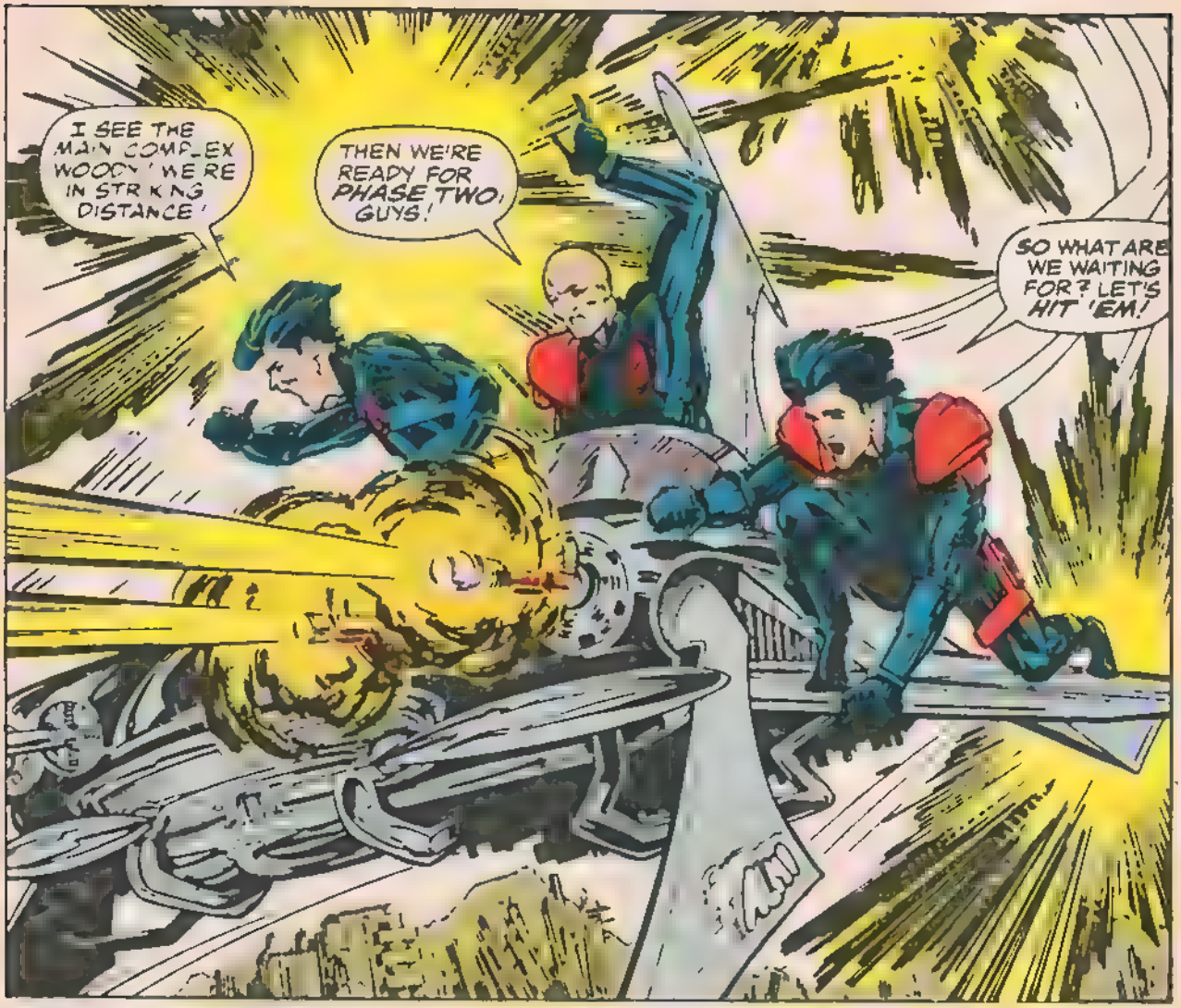
beautiful, that countless head-spinningly handsome actors and male models are chasing *her!* Now that her dream of being the ultimate social celebrity has come true, how will she handle the nightmare: unpredictable, but certain, death?

"This is a series laden with conflict," writer **Peter B. Gillis** said of STRIKE FORCE: MORITURI, which he co-created with artist **Brent Anderson**. "This is a very heavy characterization series which is also why I am really delighted that Brent Anderson is doing it with me, because Brent can really do individual characters, their faces, nuances, body language—all that stuff. At the same time, he can do all the spiffy super hero stuff as well. Since I really want to get into the characters, to do it well you really have to have someone who can do expressions which have a lot behind them. Brent is really great at that."

Brent, himself, stated that, "What attracted me to STRIKE FORCE: MORITURI was the opportunity to do the realism of figures and faces. The premise for the series really piqued my interest because it was so different. Even though the series is about death—exploring how people deal with their own death, the series also has its up side. Peter's approach to the characters is a positive one. In fact, we both made a pledge that we would always play down the death part and play up the emotional part."

When the series begins, the alien invasion has been ravaging Earth for five years. By the time Harold, Jelene and Aline become the Monturi super heroes **Viking**, **Adept** and **Blackthorn**, the Earth's government, **the Paideia**, has everything in place to make sure that the Morituri are *public* heroes as well, possessing the full support and gratitude of the government. The government's support can be distilled into one word: propaganda. To keep everyone's morale up in the seemingly endless war with the aliens, the Paideia has launched a colossal media blitz about the Morituri. No public relations stone is left unturned in the quest to keep the Morituri in the heroic limelight. Among other




I SEE THE MAIN COMPLEX WOODY! WE'RE IN STRIKING DISTANCE!
THEN WE'RE READY FOR PHASE TWO, GUYS!
SO WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? LET'S HIT 'EM!

things, there is a successful soap opera series about them. There is even a comic book! As Peter explains, that comic book will play a key role in the series.

"Periodically, we will be doing comics within the comic," Peter said. "The first issue has one called *The Last Stand of the Blackwatch*, which is about three prototype Morituri. They kill the field commander of the aliens in the alien headquarters of Cape Town, but die in doing so."

Brent's reaction, when Peter told him of the proposal, was positive, but guarded. "I didn't know how well it could be pulled off simply because it has been attempted before in comics and it is very difficult to do right," Brent said, referring to the comic-within-a-comic concept. "When the first plot came in and Peter had put the idea into the very first issue, I cried, 'Oh, no!' because I hadn't really scoped the nuts and bolts of how to render it. **Whilce Portacio** lives out in this area and we've become kind of good buddies. I really like his angular and dynamic style. So I thought it would be good to have Whilce do the pencils of the comic-within-the-comic over my layouts. I really needed a different kind of style to make sure there was no confusion. One thing I did was to tilt the image of the pages of the comic-within-the-comic, put them off-center and ask for a light yellow be used in the gutters and margins of the pages. I think Whilce and I did a good collaboration. Speaking of the comic-within-the-comic, it is called THE BLACK-WATCH, which was one of the original titles for the series."

When asked why Peter wanted to do such an unusual series, he said, "Originally, it was sort of a comment on the 'demolition derby' that has gone on in most super hero comics in any company the past couple of years. It has become harder to do death, especially with characters being brought back much later. But the thing is that these characters in STRIKE FORCE: MORITURI are mortal, just as you and I . . But I really wanted to do a series whose theme was death because death is so much involved in the act of heroism. Paradoxically, I also wanted to make the series a hopeful, strong one that will charge people up rather than just depress or horrify them. One thing I can tell you now, there is not going to be any 'Death of the Month' tone in STRIKE FORCE MORITURI."

Brent added, "I was talking to **Scott Williams**, the inker on the series, and we got to talking about what could possibly be STRIKE FORCE: MORITURI's niche in comics. It will be coming out after the New Universe and other new projects appearing this summer and comparisons are inevitable. But I really have no idea what it could be compared to. I hope that the premise is strong enough to lure readers in and keep them with the series. I hope that most readers will want to explore the characters of STRIKE FORCE: MORITURI with us."

—Dwight Jon Zimmerman

STAR SPOTLIGHT

DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH™

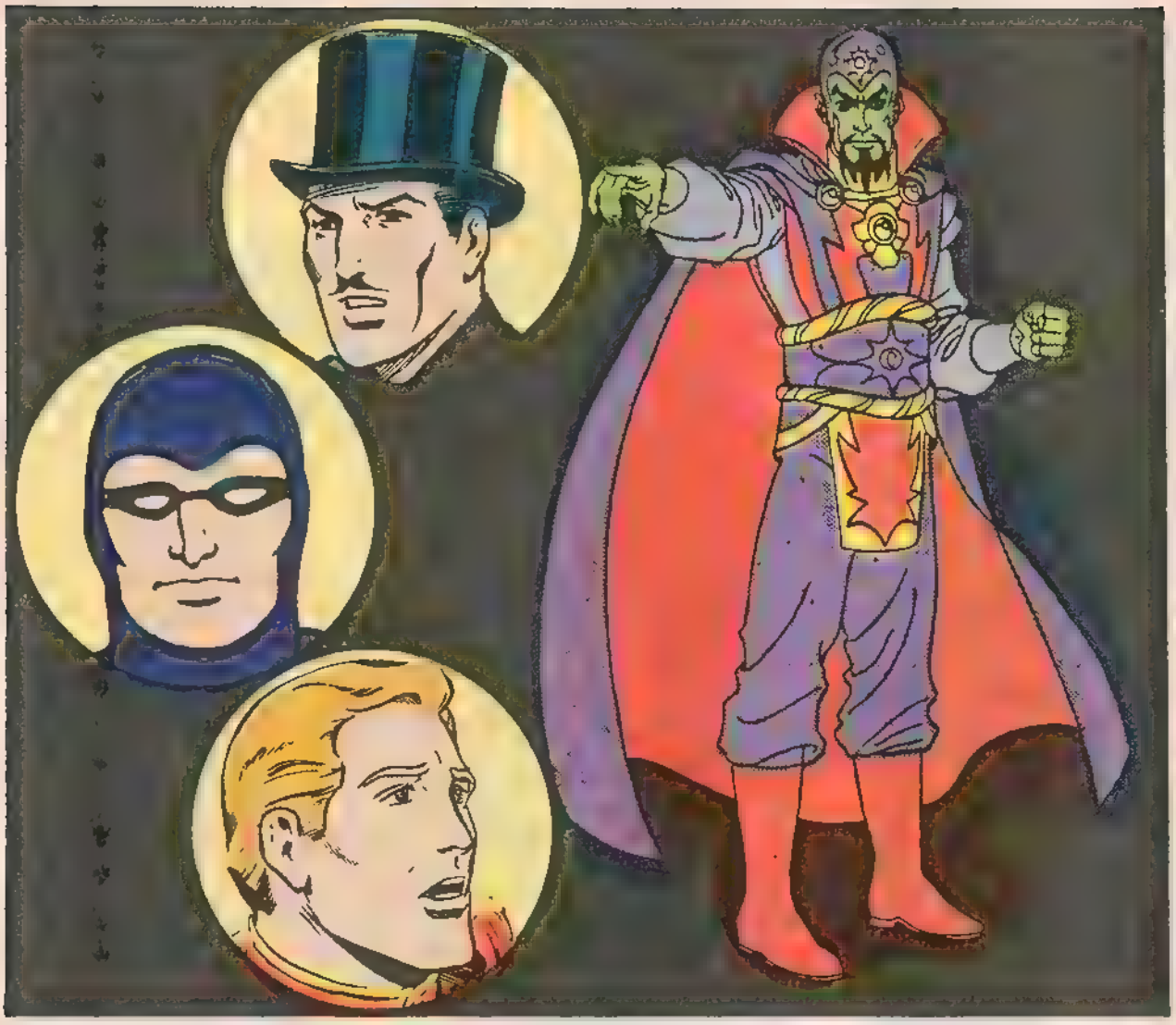
DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH © 1986 King Features Entertainment Inc

Mandrake the Magician: trained in the special techniques of certain Tibetan monks, Mandrake is skilled in ventriloquism, hypnotism and mass illusion. In essence, Mandrake can make people see and hear whatever he wants them to. In addition, by using his hypnotic powers, he can make himself invisible and read the minds of those in his hypnotic powers. And who knows what other mystic powers he possesses?

The Phantom: Also known as Ghost-Who-Walks. A descendant of **Sir Christopher Standish**, who, along with his son **Kit**, was attacked by Singg pirates. Only Kit survived the attack, washing ashore in the land of Bengalla. Finding the skull of his father, he swore to devote his life to fighting evildoers, and donned the distinctive garb of the Phantom. In each succeeding generation that pledge has been renewed by a new Kit who in turn becomes the new Phantom. The Phantom has the power to draw on the strength and powers of jungle animals

Flash Gordon: a fearless astronaut turned adventurer, he has faced the evil **Ming the Merciless** of Mongo more times than he cares to remember, and has always emerged victorious.

These three great heroes have joined forces to thwart the dastardly



designs of Ming to conquer the Earth. Together they are the **Defenders of the Earth,** the newest feature from Star Comics.

The impetus for this exciting new project came from Marvel Productions, on the west coast. MP had worked out a deal with the King Features Syndicate to produce a cartoon show featuring three of King's most popular adventure heroes, namely, Mandrake, the Phantom and Flash Gordon. The concept seemed to work, and Marvel thought that in addition to making a spectacular cartoon show, it would be a great addition to the Star Comics line.

The editing chores have fallen to **Mike Higgins.** Mike is very enthusiastic about the book and is determined to make it one of the best books in the Star (and Marvel) line. To that end he has assembled a group of very talented people to work on the book. **Bob Harras** will be adapting and plotting the stories, **Alex Saviuk** will be doing the pencils, and **Fred Fredericks,** longtime King Features artist, will be inking the book. The writer is a special surprise—none other than—**Stan Lee**!

That's right, true believers! The Smiling One is back and Star (and Marvel) has him! Stan has in recent years devoted himself to wheeling and dealing with the Hollywood crowds on behalf of Marvel Productions, along with writing the SPIDER-MAN comic strip and, of course, Stan's Soapbox. Stan had worked on developing the Defenders of the Earth cartoon show, and when it was arranged that Star would be publishing the comic book, he asked if he could script it. Naturally, everyone was thrilled, as will you be when you read Stan's work!

Bob Harras, who will be taking the cartoon scripts and adapting them to the comic book format, is better known for his editing than his writing. Formerly a member of the infamous Bob Squad, he currently edits X-FACTOR, HULK, G.I. JOE, G I JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS, and SPITFIRE. He is also writing the long-awaited S.H.I.E.L.D. Limited Series. Bob is very happy working on DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH. "I'm having a good time," Bob told MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE. "It's great working with Mandrake, the Phantom and Flash, the old, old heroes." His enthusiasm for the series will be apparent to all when DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH hits the stands.

The series will take place in the future, and the heroes, with the help of their various offspring and proteges, will pit themselves against the malevolent machinations of Ming the Merciless. Need more be said?

For those of you who have thrilled to the adventures of these three legendary heroes, or for anyone meeting them for the first time, welcome aboard the Star rollercoaster of adventure. With DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH, we promise you a ride you won't soon forget.

—Sandy Hausler

STAN'S SOAPBOX

MARVEL 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Hi, Hallowed One! Got a treat for you today. We're gonna travel back through time together—and you won't even haveta buy a ticket!

Y'see, while I'm breathlessly waiting to receive all your letters telling me what to write about in these imperishable articles, ol' **Slim-Jim Salicrup** suggested that I lead you back a quarter of a century to the creation of the Marvel Universe.

Now I'll be glad to do that, glad to tell you all the secrets about how to create your own little universe, or cosmos, or even just a humble little galaxy if you prefer—but you have to promise not to reveal a word of this to our cantankerous competitors. Hey, I know I can trust you.

Speaking of universes, I wanna tell you something right up front. By now you've undoubtedly read and savored the big, special, 25th Anniversary issue of THE FANTASTIC FOUR. Well, I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank one of the best storymen I know for writing the plot of that sizzlin' super epic. No, you silly person, I'm not referring to **Irving Forbush**, though he's probably good, too I mean none other than your everlovin' editor in chief, **Gentleman Jim Shooter.**

You see, Jim and I thought it would be a great idea for the first editor in chief (my own smilin' self) and the present editor in chief (little Jolly Jimmy) to team up on this extra special collectors' item issue. (Of course, even if I didn't think it was a good idea, you don't say no to a guy who looks down at you even when you're standing on tippy toes!)

Anyway, not only is ol' High-Pockets a crackerjack script writer, but he's got to be one of the most talented plotters in the biz. He did such a brilliant job of tying together all the divergent elements of the FF story that my own little task of writing the dialogue and captions was easy as tripping over a wrinkled rug. So here's to your Bullpen's rollickin', rock-steady ramrod — consider thyself dutifully No-Prized, O multi-talented Elongated One!

And now it's time to journey back to the early days of Marvel, when **Howard the Duck** was just an egg and heroes were a-bornin'!

I'm frequently asked how we originally planned the entire Marvel Universe. The answer is, we didn't! It just sort of happened. For example . . . **the FF, Hulk, Spidey, Thor, Avengers** and **Daredevil** were our first Marvel titles. Well, we weren't thinking "universe" when we created them. All we had in mind was making our fun-filled little epics as realistic as possible. That's why our heroes lived in real cities (i.e. New York) rather than Metropolis, Gotham, Plainview or wherever. Also, in continuing to strive for realism, I got a kick out of having characters from one comic occasionally run into others from another comic. Hence, we started our crossover appearances and our guest shots.

Remember once when **Sub-Mariner** needed a lawyer? Who did he go to? **Matt Murdock**, of course. And whenever we needed to show some news photographers in one of our mags, you'd be apt to find **Peter Parker** on the scene, even though he had nothing to do with the story itself. Well, little by little, we realized our characters were all inhabiting the same world. And we looked at it, and it was good!

But now, let's take a quantum leap forward into the present again. Today, the mighty Marvel Universe has become so detailed, so complex, so incredibly fascinating to both readers and researchers alike that Shooter's Strike Force is presently producing three (count 'em, THREE!) separate publications devoted exclusively to keeping all of us (including the Bullpen itself) up-to-date about who's who and what's what—not to mention where, when, why and how!

For those of you who've been dallying in Asgard these past few years, the names of those priceless publications are THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE, which lists and describes characters from A to Z; THE OFFICIAL MARVEL INDEX SERIES, telling what happened in each ish, title by title; and MARVEL SAGA, re-telling stories from 25 years ago till now, in chronological order!

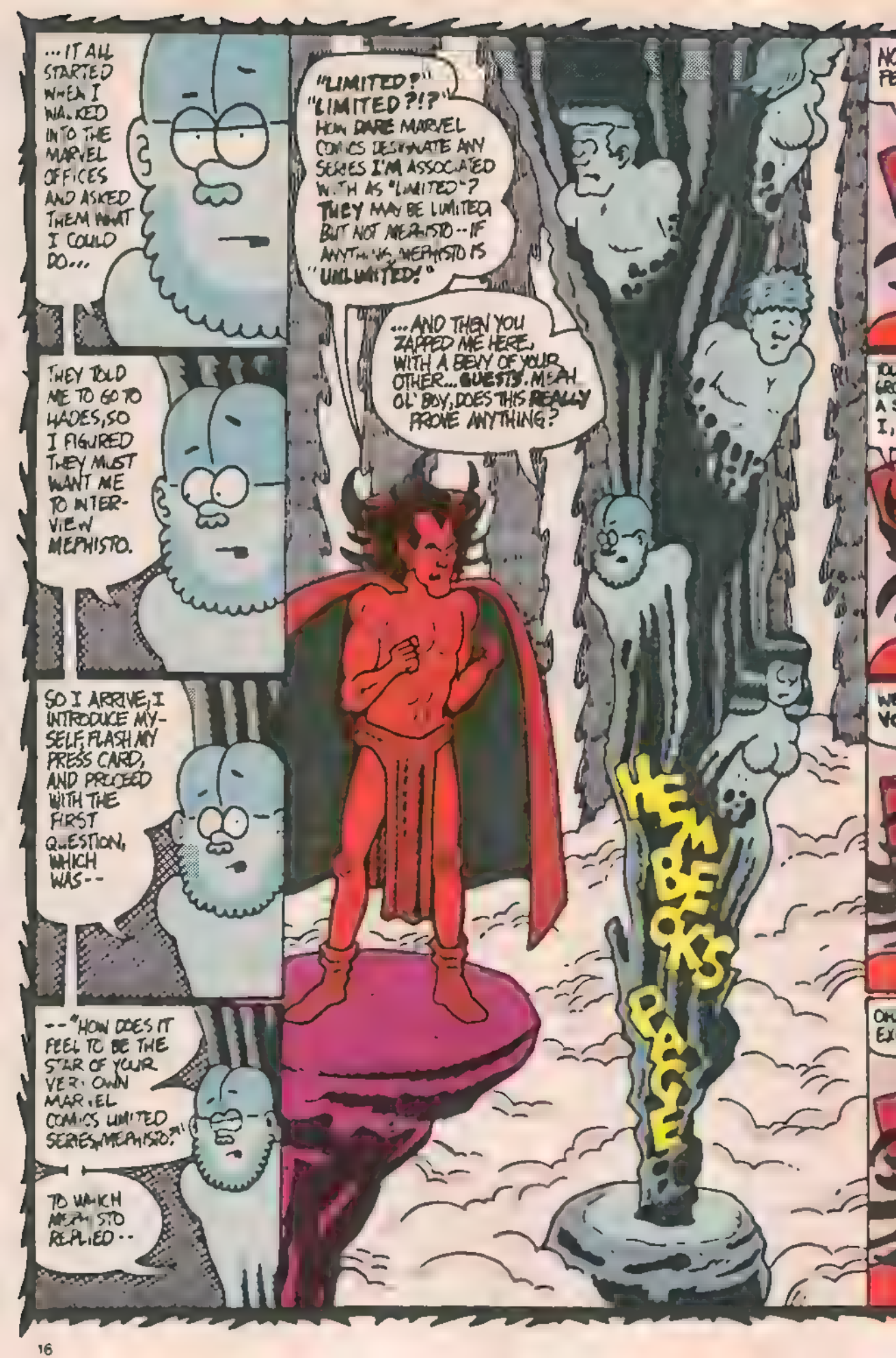
However, let me squelch the rumor that we're now competing with the ENCYLOPEDIA BRITANNICA. It's totally untrue. Probably won't happen for at least another week or two!

Well, if I don't wrap this up now you're liable to think I'm trying to sell you something—which isn't a bad idea!

So, till next ish, take your vitamins, wear your seat belt and stay out of drafts! Readers like you are hard to find!

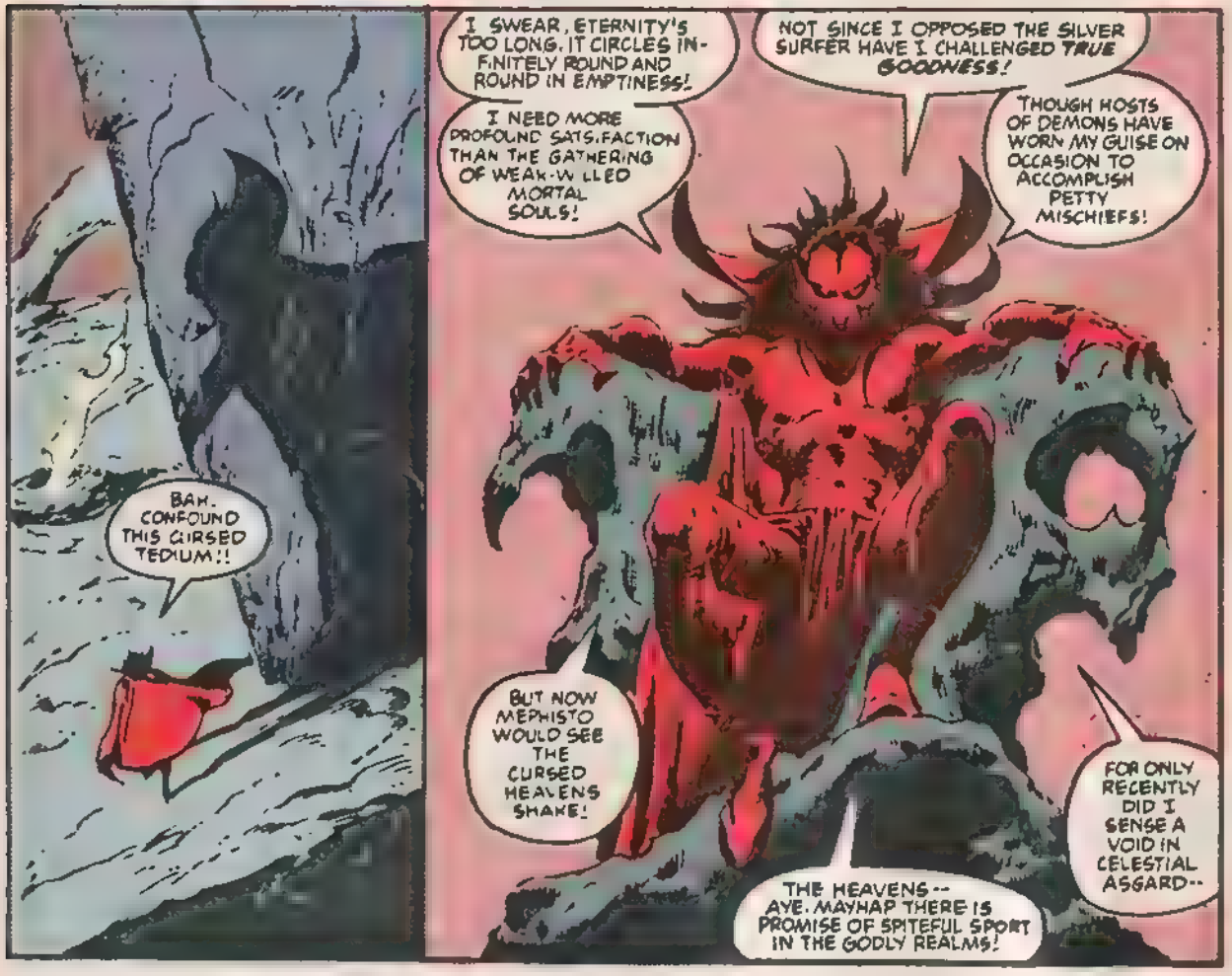
Excelsior!

Stan


...IT ALL STARTED WHEN I WALKED INTO THE MARVEL OFFICES AND ASKED THEM WHAT I COULD DO...
THEY TOLD ME TO GO TO HADES, SO I FIGURED THEY MUST WANT ME TO INTERVIEW MEPHISTO.
SO I ARRIVE, I INTRODUCE MYSELF, FLASH MY PRESS CARD, AND PROCEED WITH THE FIRST QUESTION, WHICH WAS--
--"HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE THE STAR OF YOUR VERY OWN MARVEL COMICS LIMITED SERIES, MEPHISTO?!"
TO WHICH MEPHISTO REPLIED--
"LIMITED?" "LIMITED?!?" HOW DARE MARVEL COMICS DESIGNATE ANY SERIES I'M ASSOCIATED WITH AS "LIMITED"? THEY MAY BE LIMITED, BUT NOT MEPHISTO--IF ANYTHING, MEPHISTO IS "UNLIMITED!"
...AND THEN YOU ZAPPED ME HERE, WITH A BEVY OF YOUR OTHER... GUESTS. MEAH OL' BOY, DOES THIS REALLY PROVE ANYTHING?
HEMBECK'S PAGE

,BUT IT MAKES ME EL GOOD.
WELL, YOU WON'T FEEL SO GOOD WHEN YOU GO UP AGAINST THE FANTASIC FOUR, X-FACTOR, THE AVEN-GERS, AND THE X-MEN.
--IT IS THEY YOU NEED TO WORRY ABOUT--NOT I!
WHAT ARE YOU GETTING AT?
'LL NOTICE EACH OF THOSE OUPS IS SCHEDULED FOR EGLE ISSUE APIECE, WHILE I APPEAR IN ALL FOUR.
YEAH, SO?
(SAY, WOULD YOU SCRATCH BEHIND MY LEFT EAR?..)
(..AND GO SCRATCH YOURSELF!)
YOU'RE CRAZY. MARVE... WOULDN'T LET YOU RUN OFF ALL THOSE CHARACTERS-- WHAT WOULD THEY DO FOR SUPER HEROES?
ELL, I HEAR BROTHER OOPOO IS AVAILABLE...
..AND HE PROBABLY ALWAYS WILL BE...
ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO TELL THE READERS ABOUT?
YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS ANY OF MY SPECIAL MESSAGES, NOW DO YOU?
YOUR MESSAGE IS COMING THROUGH LOUD AND CLEAR, MEPHISTO. NOW HOW ABOUT SENDING ME BACK TO WHERE I BELONG?
I'D DO THAT GLADLY, CEPT FOR ONE THING.
WHICH IS?..
YOU ARE WHERE YOU BELONG!
..OOPS...

Mephisto™


I SWEAR, ETERNITY'S TOO LONG. IT CIRCLES INFINITELY ROUND AND ROUND IN EMPTINESS!
NOT SINCE I OPPOSED THE SILVER SURFER HAVE I CHALLENGED TRUE GOODNESS!
I NEED MORE PROFOUND SATISFACTION THAN THE GATHERING OF WEAK-WILLED MORTAL SOULS!
THOUGH HOSTS OF DEMONS HAVE WORN MY GUISE ON OCCASION TO ACCOMPLISH PETTY MISCHIEFS!
BAH. CONFOUND THIS CURSED TEDIUM!!
BUT NOW MEPHISTO WOULD SEE THE CURSED HEAVENS SHAKE!
FOR ONLY RECENTLY DID I SENSE A VOID IN CELESTIAL ASGARD--
THE HEAVENS-- AYE. MAYHAP THERE IS PROMISE OF SPITEFUL SPORT IN THE GODLY REALMS!

Editor **Ralph Macchio** thinks of him as "a really good villain." Assistant editor **Craig Anderson** calls him "evil incarnate." He's **Mephisto**, the fiendish lord of the netherworld, and he is the star of a four-issue limited series. Printed on Baxter paper and priced at $1.50, the exciting first issue will soon be available at comic book specialty shops everywhere!

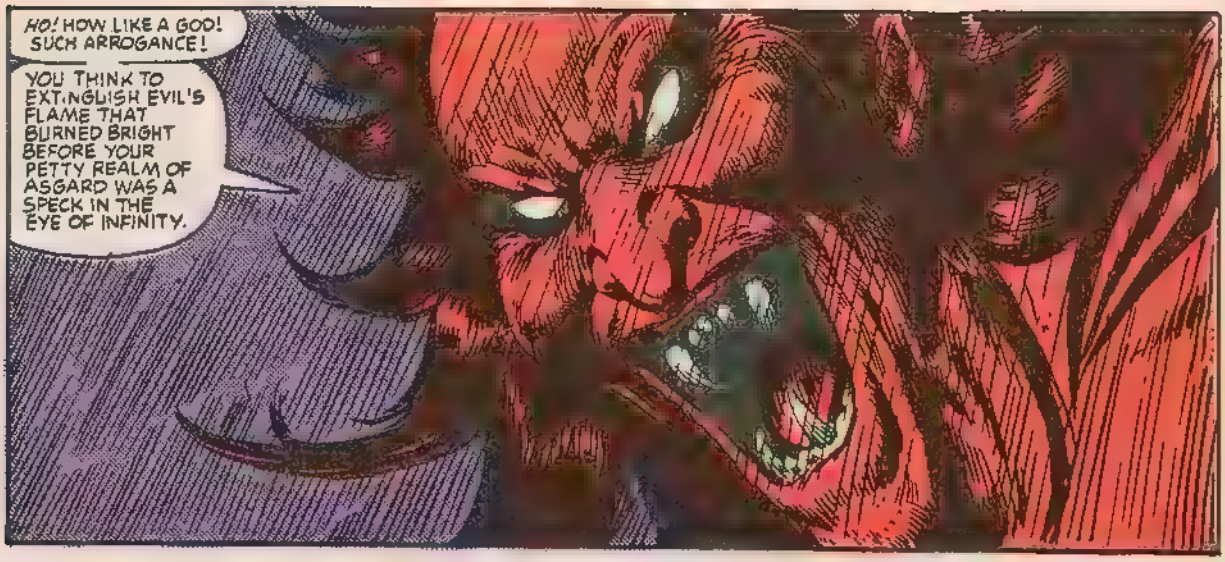
For years, Mephisto has attempted to corrupt heroes such as **the Silver Surfer** and **Thor**! But the MEPHISTO Limited Series, scripted by writer/artist **Al Milgrom** (whose recent credits include THE INCREDIBLE HULK and SECRET WARS II) and drawn by AVENGERS and FANTASTIC FOUR penciler **John Buscema**, features what might just be the Lord of Lies' most dastardly plot ever!

As the series opens, Al explains, Mephisto has grown bored with "everyday, run of the mill souls. He's looking for a rarer commodity!" And that "rarer commodity" turns out to be the soul of a hero!

Mephisto's evil quest leads him into battles with some of Marvel's greatest super-teams! The first issue revolves around his encounter with **the Fantastic Four**! And the latter three issues feature the ruler of the netherworld face-to-face with **X-Factor**, **the X-Men**, and **the Avengers**!

The most shocking thing about the series, though, is that Mephisto will actually succeed in capturing at least one hero's soul! Which hero will it be? "Let's keep that a mystery," Al chuckled demonically.

Al first got the idea for a MEPHISTO Limited Series when he read last year's THOR ANNUAL, in which the God of Thunder fought Mephisto to save an innocent soul. "The character looked so interesting and John Buscema seemed to have had so much fun drawing him that I thought, 'Ooh, let's see some more of this!' " Al recalls. He proposed the series at a Marvel editorial meeting on new limited series, and Ralph Macchio decided that he wanted to edit it. "I've always liked Mephisto!" Ralph explains. "I'd worked with him recently in the THOR ANNUAL, and since I'll be


HO! HOW LIKE A GOD! SUCH ARROGANCE!
YOU THINK TO EXTINGUISH EVIL'S FLAME THAT BURNED BRIGHT BEFORE YOUR PETTY REALM OF ASGARD WAS A SPECK IN THE EYE OF INFINITY.

WILL YOU STAND HERE, MALLET UPRAISED FOR ALL ETERNITY, THE VERY PORTRAIT OF FUTILITY?
HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH. RASHNESS AND FRUSTRATION WILL NOT DEFEAT SUCH PRIMAL EVIL INCARNATE STILL--

editing the SILVER SURFER Limited Series, I thought I ought to keep an eye on him."

Once Editor-in-Chief **Jim Shooter** gave Al and Ralph the go-ahead for the MEPHISTO Limited Series, their first choice for an artist seemed obvious. Both immediately thought of John Buscema, not only because John's powerful and expressive work on series such as THE AVENGERS, THE SILVER SURFER and THOR has made him one of the giants in the comics industry, but also because John was the artist who designed Mephisto for the villain's first appearance in SILVER SURFER #3, more than fifteen years ago! "John's was the first and the best!" says Ralph.

John recalls how he created a look for Mephisto: "[SILVER SURFER Writer/Editor] **Stan Lee** had come up with the idea for Mephisto; the name came before the character. I went home and designed him," he says modestly. "There wasn't much to it—it just clicked!"

Something certainly did click! As Al Milgrom points out, John's love for Mephisto shows through whenever he draws the villain! "John has always seemed to like Mephisto. He always draws him with a little extra flair!" says Al.

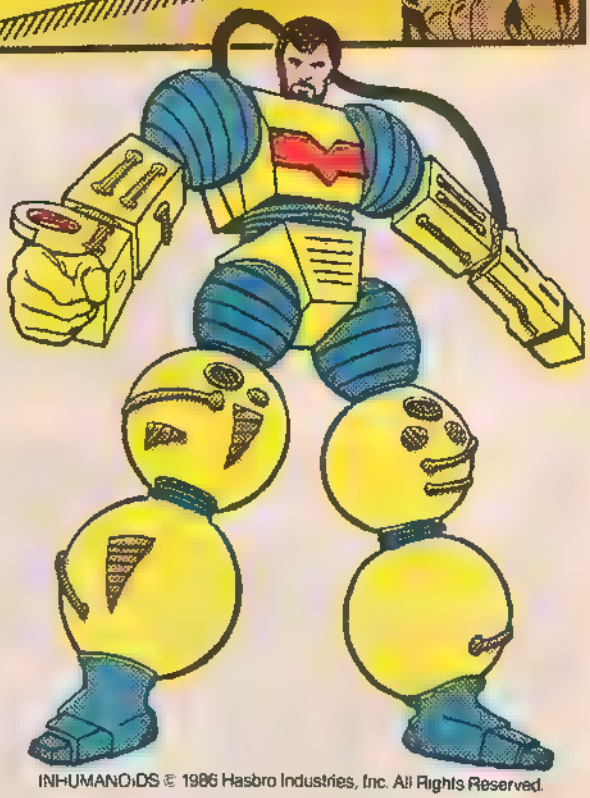
By now, it should come as no surprise that Al is very enthusiastic about working with a man whom he considers "one of my favorite artists and one of the best artists in comics!" And he's also excited about the opportunity to get a good deal of input from Jim Shooter, with whom Al chronicled some of Mephisto's most recent adventures in SECRET WARS II! "Jim has a really good handle on the character! He often has insight that no one else has!" Al says. "I'm taking his input and running with it so that I'll be able to do the best I can."

As anyone who's ever seen Al's work knows, his best is fantastic! And with John supplying the art, the MEPHISTO Limited Series is sure to be a smash! So don't miss the MEPHISTO Limited Series! A devilishly good time is guaranteed!

—Sholly Fisch

STAR SPOTLIGHT

INHUMANOIDS™



INHUMANOIDS © 1986 Hasbro Industries, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Strange things are happening in California. I don't mean the usual strange things—I'm talking real out-of-this-world, I-can't-believe-my-eyes strange. Prehistoric monsters, unseen for untold millennia, walk the Earth again, and they're not out to enjoy the sun! They're **the Inhumanoids**, and you'd better watch out! They're coming soon from Star Comics.

Fortunately for all the good people on the West Coast, **the Earth Corps** is around to see that the Inhumanoids don't get out of hand. **Dr. Herc Armstrong**, **Dr. Derek Bright**, **Eddie Augutter** (known to his friends as **Auger**) and **Jonathon M. Slattery**, a.k.a. **Liquidator**, compose this elite squad of brilliant scientists dedicated to investigating mysterious events. And what could be more mysterious than the appearance of **D.Compose** and **Tendril**, two of the Inhumanoids. And who, or what, is **Metlar**?

Of course, the baddies are not all monsters from the past. Take, for example, **Blackthorne Shore**, who, for reasons of his own, wants to control the Inhumanoids, and will destroy anything or anybody who stands in his way. He also has plans for the environmental suits of the Earth Corps, which give their wearers the ability to go head-to-head with just about anything.

The Earth Corps has allies of a sort in **the Mutores**, powerful beings who hate the dreaded Inhumanoids and want to destroy them. But they have no great love for mankind either. Can this uneasy alliance of convenience work?

These are some of the intriguing questions facing readers of Star Comics' latest sensation—THE INHUMANOIDS. Written by **Jim Salicrup** and drawn by **James W. Fry**, this series promises to be another Star Comics hit!

Jim Salicrup has been a part of Marvel for so long it seems as if he's been here forever. Starting at the tender age of fifteen, working as an office assistant, he worked his way up the ladder to an editorial position. Jim has edited X-MEN, AVENGERS, THE FANTASTIC FOUR, MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE, and, as he puts it, "just about everything at one time or another." More recently, Jim has worked on such books as DOCTOR WHO, THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH, HOWARD THE DUCK #33, and most importantly, MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE. Jim has also written KOOL-AID MAN and THE TRANSFORMERS. One of his most important works was the Spider-Man story in Marvel's Child Abuse Prevention Comic. The story encouraged a number of abused children to report child molesters.

With DOCTOR WHO and THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH Limited Series coming to an end, Jim was looking for some new projects to work on. When he heard that THE INHUMANOIDS was available, he went to editor **Eliot Brown** and asked if he could write it. **Eliot**, knowing a good thing when he sees it, agreed.

THE INHUMANOIDS is the first regular assignment for James W. Fry, but, judging from his work on the series, it won't be his last. James was formerly one of the famous (and infamous) **Romita's Raiders**. He has done numerous assignments for MARVEL UNIVERSE and has done an IRON MAN inventory story, and worked on an issue of SPIDER-MAN. James's enthusiasm for the book is positively unbridled. Speaking of the evil plans of the Inhumanoids, James said, "It chills my blood just to think about it."

THE INHUMANOIDS is not just a comic. It is also an animated television show, and there will be a set of Inhumanoid toys as well. The concept was developed by the same folks who brought us G.I. JOE and THE TRANSFORMERS. The show is written by **Flint Dille**, and Jim will be adapting the first fifteen episodes before striking out on his own, doing original stories.

Jim likes the series because it reminds him of some of the early Marvel Comics, especially some of the early issues of the FANTASTIC FOUR. "It's sort of tongue-in-cheek," explained Jim. "It doesn't take itself so seriously. Both young and old can enjoy it." Jim also thinks the series works even better as a comic book than as a cartoon. "The pace of the cartoon show is so fast," he said, "that you sometimes miss stuff."

It's clear that the only people who will be missing stuff are those who miss out on the exciting adventures in every issue of THE INHUMANOIDS!

—Sandy Hausler

WHAT--WHAT IS THAT THING?!
D'COMPOSE!

DRACULA™

A Symphony in Moonlight and Madness

Dracula.

The Lord of the Vampires.

The name conjures up images of **Bela Lugosi** or **Christopher Lee** or **Frank Langella** wearing a long, black cloak and stalking his prey with a cordial "Good evening." Or it brings back fond memories of **Marv Wolfman** and **Gene Colan's** classic 1970s TOMB OF DRACULA comics series.

But long before the Prince of Darkness appeared in either of these forms, he could be found in **Bram Stoker's**, classic 1897 novel DRACULA. And it is the original novel which will serve as the basis for the graphic novel DRACULA: A SYMPHONY IN MOONLIGHT AND NIGHTMARE, written and drawn by MOONSHADOW artist **Jon J Muth** and featuring an introduction by much-acclaimed horror comics artist **Berni Wrightson**!

But the Dracula in the graphic novel may not be the one readers are used to! "People are accustomed to thinking of Dracula as a villain," Jon explains "But the graphic novel goes beyond that. In the graphic novel, Dracula is more of a manifestation, an embodiment of evil!"

"Each movie and book about Dracula has a different interpretation of who Dracula was and how he died. And Jon's view of Dracula is very close to the way I envision him!" says the graphic novel's editor, **Ann Nocenti**. "In the graphic novel, Dracula is defined in the eye of the beholder." As a result, everyone who looks at Dracula sees something different! In fact, the reader won't even get to see Dracula's face until halfway through the story!

In this respect, the graphic novel is similar to Stoker's original book. And it was Jon's love of the original DRACULA which motivated him to create the graphic novel! "DRACULA is so obviously adaptable—there are so many great visual moments in it! I started working on it on my own after I saw Berni Wrightson's FRANKENSTEIN book and saw that Berni had been able to put together a pretty suc-

DRACULA artwork © 1986 Jon J Muth. All rights reserved.

cessful package. Meanwhile, my work in EPIC ILLUSTRATED and MOONSHADOW had helped me get acquainted with the people at Marvel, so I approached Marvel Editor-in-Chief **Jim Shooter** with DRACULA." But while Jon has a great fondness for Stoker's book, he insists that DRACULA: A SYMPHONY IN MOONLIGHT AND NIGHTMARE will be more than a simple adaptation! "I started out fairly in touch with the original, but then I strayed from it. I'm trying to emphasize the sense of fear felt in Stoker's book," Jon says. "The graphic novel's not so much a straight adaptation as a readaptation." As in the original story, Dracula is a cultured gentleman, a count from Romania who arrives in England with a mad servant and a mysterious past. But the graphic novel uses Stoker's story as a springboard to tell a gripping tale of the effect Dracula has on the people who meet him! Jon describes the graphic novel as "the story of evil descending on a small, unnamed community in England. It shows how a certain group of people copes with the evil that is Dracula."

A huge amount of research has gone into making the graphic novel as realistic and as powerful as it is! Over the course of about two years, Jon studied the techniques used in early silent films, particularly the work of German expressionists, looking for the perfect images to use in the graphic novel. But even beyond that, he actually traveled to Austria to capture the proper mood! "I made a special trip to Vienna and spent a couple of days in the cemetery there!" he recalled.

Perhaps the most special aspect of DRACULA: A SYMPHONY IN MOONLIGHT AND NIGHTMARE, though, is the eighty-page graphic novel's format. As in the Ecpic Comics series MOONSHADOW which Jon produces with writer **J. Marc DeMatteis**, Jon is painting the entire graphic novel in watercolors. But what sets the DRACULA graphic novel apart is that the words and art are on separate pages! The result, as Ann Nocenti points out, is "a completely new experience! The words echo and build in your mind and reading it ends up being somewhere between reading a novel and a comic book! It's almost like reading a play!" To top off the package, Jon is surrounding each page of text with a slightly different border so that the border changes and evolves along with the story!

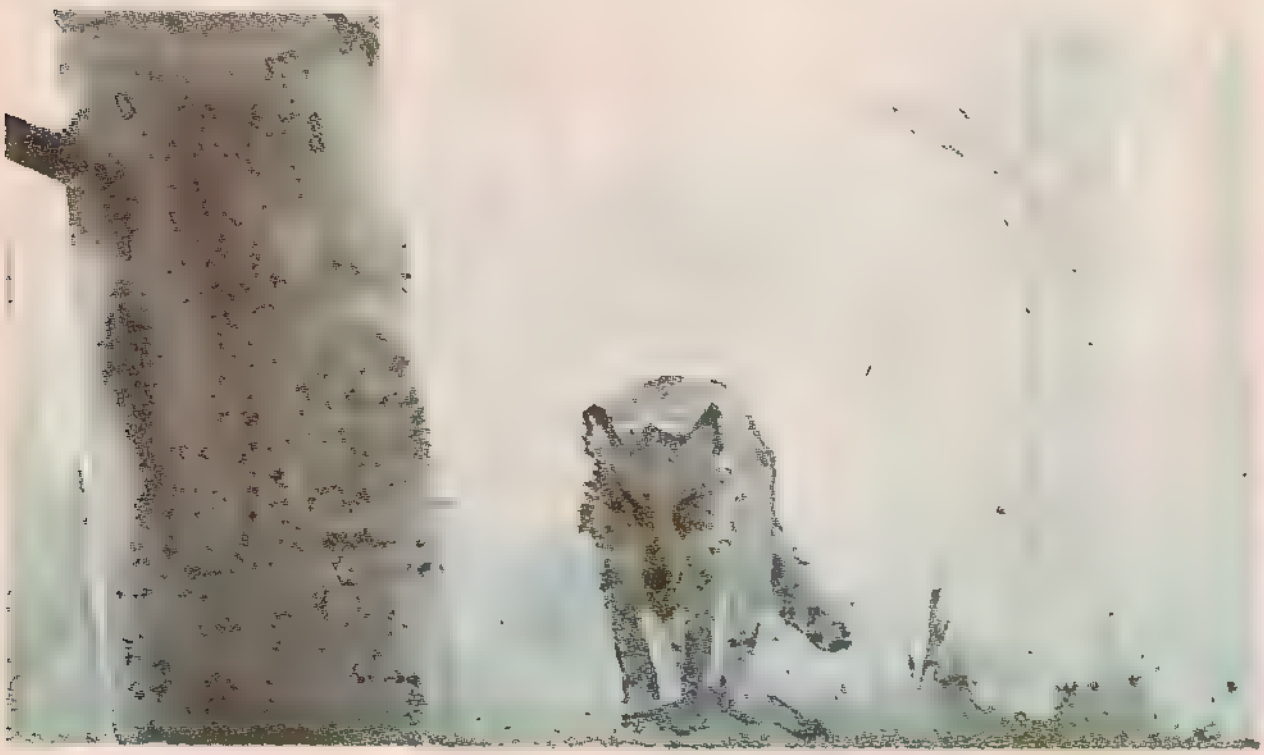
"My use of the new format is very intentional," Jon says. "I wanted to explore just what's possible in the graphic novel format! Absolutely every picture is essential to the story. There are no extra words, no extra pictures. It's all honed to its simplest form.

"There are so many possibilities that what I've done is really just the tip of the iceberg! Comics have enormous potential because comics is really the only medium where you have both literature and art at the same time. Any fiction does its work by creating a dream in the reader's mind. Graphic fiction—comics—couples words and pictures so that when the two are interacting, the effect can be the most vivid form of dreaming!"

The dream that Jon is creating in DRACULA is certainly daring, and he's pulling it off beautifully! "The writing and art are both top level!" says Ann. "It's very powerful stuff!" As you'd probably expect, Jon finds that creating the dark and striking images which make up the DRACULA graphic novel is a very different experience from working on MOONSHADOW. "MOONSHADOW is much more lighthearted and sort of a fairytale for adults," Jon says. "This is darker—not heavy but serious. I'm playing less in the graphic novel."

No doubt about it: Jon's DRACULA graphic novel is serious business! So if you want to share in the dream Jon's creating, if you want to see the medium of comics pushed to its limits and beyond, or if you just want to enjoy a well-crafted piece of horror fiction, keep your eyes peeled for DRACULA: A SYMPHONY IN MOONLIGHT AND NIGHTMARE at your local comics specialty shop this summer! Come enjoy the nightmare!

—Sholly Fisch



STAR SPOTLIGHT

Popples™

It's lucky Marvel has such good friends in Cleveland, because **Those Characters From Cleveland** have come up with another winner. Marvel, always quick to take advantage of a great opportunity, made the necessary arrangements and soon joining the GETALONG GANG, CARE BEARS and MADBALLS comes Star Comics' newest title —POPPLES!

What are **Popples**?

Popples are little furry creatures who love one thing more than anything else in the world— laughter. Humans are the Popples' favorite creatures because we can laugh. The one thing that Popples don't like about us humans is that we don't laugh enough. And that's why the Popples are here— to show us that no matter how bad things get, there's always something to smile (and laugh) about. The Popples want to make sure that each human gets his MDLR (Minimum Daily Laughter Requirement), and their greatest joy is making others laugh.

Popples have pouches that they can pop into and out of. If you see something that looks like a muff, don't kick it! It might be a Popple! They have the amazing ability to pull whatever they need from those pouches. They just pop in, pop out, and presto—there it is! They're full of tricks designed to delight and amaze you. And with writer **Stan Kay** and penciler **John Costanza** at the helm, the Popples magic should be a sight to behold.

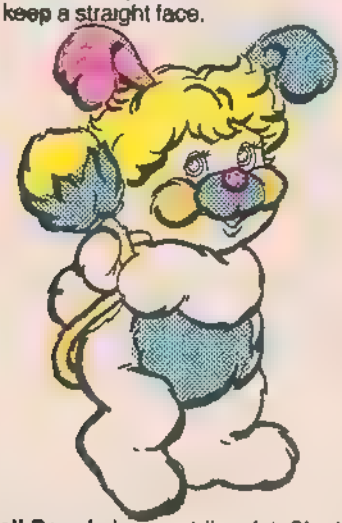
P.C. Popple is a large male Popple. No one is sure just what "P.C." stands for, but it could very well be "pretty cool." P.C. is a "cool" Popple, **the Fonz** of the Popples. He snaps his fingers and things happen. P.C. is also the Popple that other Popples go to when they have problems. He has an uncanny knack for solving them, too.

Party Popple is a large female Popple with an irresistibly contagious laugh and, as her name suggests, she just loves to party. In fact, she's a regular party animal. No occasion is too small for Party to celebrate. If the truth be known, however, she'd prefer having a perpetual private party just for two—her and P.C.

Prize Popple is the storyteller of the crew. She is also very attractive—by Popple standards, that is. When she isn't telling stories she's primping in front of a looking glass. She has a flirtatious nature and the other Popples can often be found around her laughing and listening. And if no one else is around, she can always tell stories to her constant companion—her mirror

POPPLES © 1986 Mattel, Inc All Rights Reserved.

Puzzle Popple is the brain of the group, and the class clown as well. He has a special knack for making funny faces. When Puzzle puts his mind to it, no one can look at him and keep a straight face.



Puffball Popple is a ventriloquist. She is somewhat shy by Popple standards and, in order to compensate, she throws her voice, making it appear that others are saying what she is too shy to say herself. There's one thing about Puffball—despite her white fur, she's the *cleanest* Popple around! She can't stand being dirty.

Pretty Bit Popple has the odd habit of talking in rhymes She is also the "**Miss Manners**" of the Popples, and wouldn't be caught dead attending one of Party's parties—unless, of course, she was fashionably late.

Potato Chip Popple is a very talented mimic. All she has to do is open her mouth and out comes a bird call, a wolf howl or P.C.'s snoring. Potato Chip has more pep and enthusiasm than a squad of cheerleaders and nothing ever gets her down.

Putter Popple is a practical joker Nobody is safe from his jests. He's constantly on the move playing jokes on someone. April Fool's Day, of course, is his favorite holiday.

The Popples live in little out-of-the-way places in the vicinity of humans. Human laughter attracts them and they can't bear to see anyone sad. They're always mixed up in all kinds of adventures while trying to cheer people up. For instance, when the Popples run into a couple of unhappy runaways who claim that their babysitter is really a foreign spy trying to steal secrets from their billionaire industrialist father, the Popples pitch in and straighten things out.

Another time they help **Billy**, a former high school quarterback, and **Bonnie**, former head cheerleader, who have both been replaced—by the same person! But where everyone hates the perfect **Tina Terrific**, the popples suggest throwing a party in her honor. For as the Popples know—everything isn't always as it seems.

The adventures of the Popples should be coming your way any day now. Be sure to reserve your copy today!

—Sandy Hausler

THE MARVEL AGE 1973 [PT. I]

1973 was a year of ups and downs. On the down side, a pair of reporters uncovered the Watergate conspiracy, a scandal which would reach the White House itself! By the end of the year, even Vice President **Spiro Agnew** would be charged with tax evasion and forced to resign! Meanwhile, on the brighter side, America prepared to finally withdraw its troops from Vietnam. And *American Graffiti*, a movie about the early 1960's, was enjoying huge success. The movie would pave the way for the television show HAPPY DAYS, and its producer, a man named **George Lucas**, would later go on to make a very different sort of movie—*Star Wars!*

While one war was ending in Vietnam, another kind of war was beginning in the pages of THE AVENGERS and THE DEFENDERS! And while *American Graffiti* looked at the past, AMAZING ADVENTURES turned its gaze to the future!

In 1972, AMAZING ADVENTURES had featured the adventures of the battlin' **Beast**, but now the time had come to say goodbye to the merry mutant. Before he left for good, though, readers were treated to a recap of his origin, first seen in THE X-MEN! Once more, readers thrilled to the tale of how **Norton McCoy** risked his life to prevent a major catastrophe at a nuclear plant, never dreaming that the radiation would someday cause his son **Hank** to become a mutant! Hank's mutant powers made him a natural athlete, but they also made him the target of the evil **Conquistador**, who wanted to use Hank in his own evil schemes! Fortunately, **Professor Charles Xavier** sent **Cyclops, the Angel**, and **Iceman** to help their fellow mutant, and with the Conquistador defeated, Hank joined them as the newest member of **the X-Men**! As the Beast left AMAZING ADVENTURES, his place was taken by a remarkably different kind of series. Based on concepts established in **H.G. Wells's** classic WAR OF THE WORLDS, it was the story of an Earth conquered by Martians in the twenty-first Century! Earthlings had become nothing more than slaves, but a young man named **Jonathan Raven** was determined to change all that! Trained as a gladiator for the Martians' amusement, Jonathan escaped, and using the name they had given him became the freedom fighter known as **Killraven**! Killraven gathered a small but loyal group, including the smiling marksman **M'Shulla**, the fierce **Hawk**, and the childlike giant **Old Skull**. And he certainly needed their help as they roamed the ruins of New York, battling everything from seductive sirens to mutant monsters! Although **Gerry Conway** and **Marv Wolfman** wrote Killraven's first few adventures, **Don McGregor** was the writer destined to be most closely linked to the series, and he came in with a bang! Don's first story, set in the ruins of Yankee Stadium, featured Killraven's life-or-death struggle with a giant crab creature created by his arch nemesis, **the Warlord**! The story introduced the latest member of Killraven's band, a brilliant scientist named **Carmilla Frost**. Carmilla had worked for the Martians until she saw the error of her ways. As a result, Killraven didn't fully trust Carmilla at first, but he'd soon learn that he could trust her with his life. And he'd have to!

Both the past and the present played major roles in CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE FALCON in 1973. Thanks to writers **Steve Englehart** and **Steve Gerber** and artists **Sal Buscema** and **Alan Weiss**, big things were in the air, not the least of which was **Cap's** receiving a super power! It all began when **the Viper**, an ad executive turned super-villain, injected Cap and **the Falcon** with his poisonous venom. Cap managed to get the antidote from the Viper, but much to his surprise, he discovered that the venom had reacted with the super-soldier formula in his blood to give him superhuman strength! He'd soon need all of that newfound strength, as he and Falc battled the Viper, **the Plantman**, **the Porcupine**, **the Scarecrow**, and **the Eel** in their quest to reveal the identity of the mysterious **Cowled Commander**! With the Cowled Commander and a new villain, **Solarr** (who controlled the energy of the sun), out of the way, Cap and Falc turned their attention to finding Cap's missing girlfriend, **Sharon Carter**. But when they tracked Sharon down, they found a lot more than they expected! They learned that Sharon had an older sister named **Peggy**, a woman whom Cap had known and loved in World War II! Peggy had suffered from amnesia since the War, and she fell under the sway of the evil psychologist, **Dr. Faustus**! But when Faustus tried to destroy Cap's mind, Peggy's memory returned, and she helped Cap defeat the sinister psychoanalyst. The heroes decided to help Peggy adjust to the new world in which she'd found herself, but they were interrupted by attacks by **the Cobra**, the Viper, and the Eel, collectively known as **the Serpent Squad** (not to be confused with **the Serpent Society** which is making Cap's life so difficult today), **Deadly Nightshade** (who managed to turn the Falcon into a werewolf!), and the malevolent **Yellow Claw**, whose *weakest* weapons were giant spiders and living mummies! It took Captain America, the Falcon, and **S.H.I.E.L.D.** to beat the Yellow Claw, and even then it was a close fight! No sooner had Cap and Falc beaten the Claw, though, than they faced a deadly menace from Cap's past . . . sort of. They battled a brand-new villain called **the Phoenix** (not the one who was a member of the X-Men, of course), and the Phoenix turned out to be the son of one of Cap's greatest foes in World War II, **Baron Zemo**! Cap and the Falcon believed the Phoenix dead at the end of their encounter with him, never suspecting that he would return years later as the new Baron Zemo!

While Cap encountered friends and foes from his past, the present was filled with changes in ASTONISHING TALES! Early in the year, ASTONISHING TALES continued to feature the fast-paced adventures of **Ka-Zar** and his faithful sabertooth tiger, **Zabu**, as they battled evil both in the city and in the Savage Land. But towards the end

of 1973, the ASTONISHING TALES spotlight shifted to one of Marvel's newest and most unusual characters —the thirty-foot stone giant known as **It, the Living Colossus**! It had lain immobile for months, abandoned by a group of aliens who had hoped to use It to conquer the world. But then, a crippled Hollywood special effects man named **Bob O'Bryan** discovered that, much to his surprise, he could transfer his mind into It's giant body! Bob's ability came as a surprise to the evil **Dr. Vault** too! Dr. Vault had planned to use It's power for his own ends, but he was shocked when It started walking, talking, and flying on its own! It put and end to Vault's villainous schemes, but even then, the source of It's power remained a mystery to Bob . . . one he intended to solve!

The biggest events of the year, though, were taking place in THE AVENGERS and THE DEFENDERS! **The Avengers** began the year as prisoners of the **Grim Reaper** and one of their oldest foes, **the Space Phantom**! Since **the Vision** had been programmed with the brainwave patterns of the Grim Reaper's (apparently) dead brother, **Wonder Man**, the villain offered to put the Vision's mind in a human body if the Vision would join him . . . and the human body was Captain America's! Together, Cap and the Vision managed to trick the villains, and the evil pair was defeated yet again. Of course, that meant that the Vision would remain a synthozoid, but that didn't seem to matter once he and **the Scarlet Witch** finally declared their love for each other! (And as readers of the recent THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH Limited Series know, the couple remains happily married to this day.) Not everyone was happy for Vizh and the Witch, though. When the Scarlet Witch told her brother **Quicksilver**, he was furious over her loving a synthozoid! And **Hawkeye**, who'd always had a crush on the Scarlet Witch, wasn't too happy either! The Avengers rushed off to free the X-Men, who had been enslaved by **Magneto**, and when they returned, Hawkeye decided to quit! Hawkeye was duped into teaching archery to the evil giant **Champion**, but he soon proved that the student was no match for the master, as he beat Champion without too much trouble. (Where did Hawkeye go from there? We'll see in a paragraph or two.) Meanwhile, as the Avengers defeated the supernatural **Lion God**, the public learned of the

Vision and Scarlet Witch's love for each other. Most people were happy for them, but a number of bigots didn't like the idea of a mutant and a synthozoid in love! The members of one extremist group went so far as to turn themselves into living bombs, although they succeeded in injuring the Vision, the Avengers triumphed in the end. And as **Tony (Iron Man) Stark** and **Dr. Donald (Thor) Blake** worked to save the Vision's life, each let the other know that he'd figured out the other's secret identity! As surprising as that revelation was, what followed was even more surprising, as the ex-super-villain, ex-Avenger **the Swordsman** showed up to rejoin the team! And he'd brought a friend—a Vietnamese martial arts expert called **Mantis**! The Avengers were going to need these new members sooner than they thought! The Avengers traveled to England to see **the Black Knight** at his ancestral home, Garrett Castle, but they found the Black Knight gone!

Where was he? Well, for the answer to that, we have to turn to the pages of THE DEFENDERS. Returning from their battle with the **Nameless One**, **the Defenders**, too, had found themselves at Garrett Castle, where they were captured by the sorceress, **Casiolena**. And their fellow prisoners were the cunning **Enchantress** and the Black Knight! In an attempt to get free, the Enchantress used a spell to turn a madwoman named **Barbara Norris** into the mighty **Valkyrie**! With Val's help, the Defenders beat Casiolena, but with victory won, the treacherous Enchantress turned the Black Knight into stone! **Dr. Strange** took the Knight back to his Sanctum Sanctorum to search for a cure, while Val agreed to take care of his winged

MARVEL COMICS PRICE GUIDE

Wow, what a great batch of comics in this installment, huh? If you'd like to get copies of your own, here's what you can expect to pay at your friendly neighborhood comics specialty shop. Our source is **Robert Overstreet's** The Comic Book Price Guide #16 (which also salutes Marvel's twenty-fifth anniversary). But remember: The prices below are only a guide. Actual prices may vary, and they should be even lower for copies in fair or poor condition.

	Condition		
	Good	Fine	Mint
AMAZING ADVENTURES			
17	.30	.90	1.80
18 (1st. Killraven; **Neal Adams** art)	.40	1.20	2.40
19–21		.30	.60
ASTONISHING TALES			
16–20		.40	.80
21 (1st. **Ka-Zar**, **the Living Colossus**)		.25	.50
THE AVENGERS			
107 (**Jim Starlin** art)	.75	2.20	4.40
108, 109	.70	2.00	4.00
110, 111 (**X-Men** appear)	.95	2.75	5.50
112 (1st. **Mantis**)	.70	2.00	4.00
113–118	.50	1.50	3.00
CAPTAIN AMERICA AND FALCON			
157–168		.50	1.00
THE DEFENDERS			
4 (1st. **Valkyrie**), 5	.70	2.00	4.00
6–10	.40	1.25	2.50
11	.25	.80	1.60

horse, **Aragorn**, and his enchanted Ebony Blade. The search for a cure seemed to get sidetracked constantly, though, as the Defenders, along with **the Sub-Mariner's** cousin **Nita** and their newest member Hawkeye (remember him?), faced menaces such as the doomsday device known as the Omegatron, the evil wizard, **Cyrus Black**, and the unlikely duo of **Attuma** and **the Red Ghost**! Finally, the search for a cure got underway, but no one suspected that it would set the stage for one of the greatest battles in Marvel history—the Avengers-Defenders War!

The brainchild of writer **Steve Englehart** and a bevy of artists including **Bob Brown**, **Mike Esposito**, **Frank Giacoia**, **Sal Buscema**, **Frank McLaughlin**, and **Frank Bolle**, the saga of the Avengers-Defenders War was an epic tale which spanned four months' worth of both THE AVENGERS and THE DEFENDERS! It all began when Dr. Strange mystically contacted the spirit of the Black Knight. **Loki** and **the Dread Dormammu** magically changed the Knight's reply, so that the message the Defenders got was that the only cure lay in finding the six pieces of the Evil Eye, which were scattered across the globe. As the Defenders split up to search for the pieces, Loki told the Avengers that the Defenders sought the Eye as part of a plot to conquer the universe! And since the Defenders' members included sometime-menaces such as the Sub-Mariner and **the Silver Surfer**, the Avengers found Loki's lie easy to believe. The Avengers split up to try to beat the Defenders to the pieces of the Evil Eye, and the War was on! The Vision and the Scarlet Witch headed for the South Seas where they fought the Silver Surfer, but when the Vision had to save the Scarlet Witch from an erupting volcano, the Surfer made off with the Evil Eye! Iron Man battled Hawkeye in Mexico (reminiscent of the days before Hawkeye reformed and became a hero), but when the archer caused Iron Man's repulsor rays to go out of control and destroy a building, the armored Avenger was forced to save the endangered bystanders as Hawkeye grabbed the second piece of the Eye! Dr. Strange retrieved the third piece from Indiana after magically draining **the Black Panther** and Mantis of their strength! The Swordsman and the Valkyrie vied for the next piece in South America, but when a criminal shot the Swordsman, Val summoned a doctor and returned to the United States with the Eye! And meanwhile, in Japan, Captain America and the Sub-Mariner wound up fighting not only each other but also the mutant **Sunfire**! When the smoke cleared, Cap and Namor compared notes and finally realized what had happened. So while **Thor** wrestled with **the Hulk** in Los Angeles, both teams showed up and finally decided to work together! Before they could do anything, however, Dormammu stole the Eye and used it to unite his dimension with Earth! The heroes valiantly battled Dormammu's demons and eventually wrested the Eye from the tyrant's grasp, saving Earth. And with Earth safe, the Defenders could finally try to save the Black Knight! Much to their surprise, the Defenders discovered that thanks to an ancient spell cast by the wizard **Merlin**, the Black Knight had taken human form in the twelfth Century, where he was fighting alongside **King Richard** in the Crusades! Although the Knight welcomed the Defenders' help in battling a mystic menace, in the end he told them that he'd felt out of place in the twentieth Century and he decided to stay where he was, a true Knight at last.

And so, from the heart of the twelfth Century, we end this part of our look at the twentieth Century. Next time, we'll be covering the first appearances of **Red Sonja**, **Moondragon**, and maybe even **Fangor, the Monster that Walks Like a Man**! So as **the Beverly Hillbillies** used to say: Y'all come back now, y'hear?

—Shelly Fisch

Send your letters to MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Comics Group,
387 Park Avenue South, New York, New York, 10016

We really had no choice—we *had* to use this lettercol title. You see, it was suggested by not one, but two Marvelites, *Dennis Viau Jr.* of Racine, WI and *Brad Carlson* of Roseville, MN. We always say that you, the fans, are our real editors here at Marvel, and when two of our editors gang up on us like that, well, what can we do but give in?

And, as we always do in the second paragraph, here's us telling you that if you have a suggestion for a title to grace that 6" × 2 1/2" space up there, send it in! Or are you going to let Dennis and Brad do all the work?

And now . . . the assembled letters:

Jim Shooter,

About 25 years ago, a man named **Stan Lee** took a fledgling publishing company and turned it into a giant. He injected into this company his enthusiasm and creativity, hired the best talent, created the finest stories and, when he was finished, Marvel Comics emerged as the leader in the comic book industry. Through the Sixties and early Seventies he led his powerhouse of ideas to new heights of comics excellence.

Then something happened. Increasing costs caused comics prices to skyrocket, sales plummeted, titles were cut, and creativity stagnated. Only the best titles retained sales and prices continued to rise.

Stan had quit.

He passed the torch to you, **Mr. Shooter.**

Headquarters were moved, titles were revamped, new talent was hired, prices stabilized, sales reached new records, titles were added, creativity flourished, and the House of Ideas regained its power.

For the second time Marvel led the industry into a renaissance. A renaissance that started with MARVEL SUPER HEROES SECRET WARS #1 and that continues today. Marvel's major competitor issued its own secret war, of sorts, and new comics companies try every day to mimic the Marvel magic. They try valiantly, but they always, as they must, fail.

The past few months have seen the issuance of some of the best comics ever published. AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #274 and 275 will long be remembered as classics. So will AVENGERS #265 and 266. The new HULK has been above excellent. THE PUNISHER, THOR, MARVEL SAGA, DAREDEVIL, "The Death of Captain Jean DeWolff" in PETER PARKER, and X-MEN #201–203 have all been classic comics that are without equal. Once again, Marvel comics are leading the industry down new and exciting avenues and once again may I proudly exclaim Make Mine Marvel!

Thank you, Mr. Shooter. My view of the history of Marvel comics may be a little tilted, but I think that comic book fans and the industry as a whole owe you a debt of gratitude for making comics in general better than ever before.

Gary O'Neal
Athens, GA

Thank you, *Gary*, from Jim and all the rest of us at Marvel. Like you said, we could quibble a little with your historical accuracy (especially since Stan Lee has *never* quit Marvel Comics, merely gone on to a new position), but we appreciate the emotion. We try to do the best comics we can and we're glad that people like you appreciate our efforts.

By the way, we hope we won't ever believe your statement that any company that competes with us will "always, as they must, fail." We're glad you have such confidence in us, but if we ever subscribed to that belief ourselves, we might grow complacent, and wouldn't try so hard to put out the absolute best comics we can. And we wouldn't want that to happen, ever.

Dear Marvel,

I'm writing in response to the great number of people who wrote to me concerning my letter printed in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #32. I would just like to say thank you very much to all of them, and I'm extremely sorry I cannot write back to all of them. Among those who wrote me were **Christy Marx**, and three other girls, but the majority were boys! I found this odd, that boys were giving me support about my being a girl who reads comics! Nonetheless, I thank all of them for taking the time to write me a letter, and thank you Marvel, for printing mine!

Marisa Antonello
64 Cromwell Crescent
Hamilton, Ontario, CANADA

Introducing a new department here in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE—the letter of the month! Every month, we'll select one letter that stands out for whatever cockamamie reason we pick that month—either because it's funny, or incisive, or heartfelt, or whatever, and present it here in this space, all special-like. The letter-writer of the month gets no prizes, no fanfare, just the inner glow that comes from knowing that your letter is the MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE LETTER OF THE MONTH.

So let's see what the premiere letter is . . .

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

Please forward this letter to **Peter Parker**. It'll save me time trying to get past **J.J.J.**

Hey, Pete. Now I know where you're at. It feels great to finally be graduating from high school. Come this fall it's off to college, but I have to say you influenced me a great deal during my final three years in school. I read and reread your adventures as ol' **Spidey** and saw you grow from a young man to an adult as yourself. You showed us all your human side while going through a lot of tough changes. I appreciate you sharing that with me and everyone else.

Thanks again, guy.

Randy Rankins
Box 273 RD #3
Richfield Springs, NY 13439

Dear MARVEL AGErs,

I want to compliment you on THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION, THE X-MEN and HEROES FOR HOPE. They're all great.

Now, if THE FANTASTIC FOUR is your first comic book, how can CAPTAIN AMERICA and THE INCREDIBLE HULK be in in the #300's and THE FF be in the #200's?

Why aren't any of **the Transformers** in THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION (Spider-Man did guest-star in #3)?

Please ask **Chris Claremont** what the mysterious connection between **Nightcrawler** and **Mystique** is? I read a conversation between them (during a fight) in X-MEN #142 (page 21, panel 1).

I tried to make this letter short because I know you have a lot more letters to read, so, keep the great work up!

Joey Gee
6618 Trudy Way
Sacramento, CA 95831

You didn't number your questions, Joey, but we'll number our answers because we feel like it.

1) While THE FANTASTIC FOUR is the premiere super hero title of the Marvel Universe, we did publish comics before FF#1—all the way back to MARVEL COMICS #1 in 1939! When Thor got his own series, it was *after* FF #1, but it was in an already-running mag called JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY, #83 to be exact. When the series got changed so the title was THOR, we kept the numbering. And it's kinda the same story with *Cap* and *the Hulk*, but the mags there were TALES TO ASTONISH and TALES OF SUSPENSE. All clear?

2) The Transformers will be showing up in THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE TRANSFORMERS. There's just too many of 'em to fit into the regular book.

3) We did; he just chuckled and walked off.

Dear Marvel,

Allow me to introduce myself. I am the president and founder of D.O.O.M., the acronym for Disciples Of Obliterative Machinations. We are a super-villain fan club, dedicated to violence, corruption and evil. We have been greatly pleased lately, due to the return of **Dr. Doom** and **Annihilus**. But, as always, our cause has been defeated by the minions of good. So we propose to you at Marvel that you create a series for a villain (or two). At first this may sound ridiculous or unreasonable, but think about it for a while and then you will agree with me that this will be the best thing you have done since FANTASTIC FOUR #5! What could be better than Dr. Doom and Annihilus? **Galactus**?

You readers! Please send letters of encouragement! And until Annihilus turns good (like that sap **Magneto**), Make Mine Marvel!

Master Disaster
Somewhere, MA

Okay, *Master*—this one's for you! Coming your way is a brand new limited series called MEPHISTO, and in each issue, Marvel's brimstone badguy takes on a different super team. The series is written by *Al Milgrom* and drawn by *John Buscema*, and ought to be coming your way September. Watch for it, evil-boosters!

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I am an artist. I would like to try out for the best comics company around. Marvel, of course. But one aspect of your rules confuses me. You stress that only photocopies of the original art should be sent in. Then you say to do my art on Bristol paper with kid finish. Now how am I supposed to get Bristol paper in a Xerox? It's impossible.

Also, I have a question about bending the rules. I have a friend who wants to be a writer. We were wondering if we could do an entire comic book (22 pages) to submit. It would not be inked or colored, but the pencils would be completed and the scripting would be conveniently lettered in, eliminating the need for a plot summary. Is this possible? Please respond to this letter soon. I really need to know, my career is at stake (ha ha, cute, eh?). So until **Reed Richards's** underwear snaps (ouch!) make mine Marvel.

Name And Address
Withheld by Request
Even If We Don't Know Why

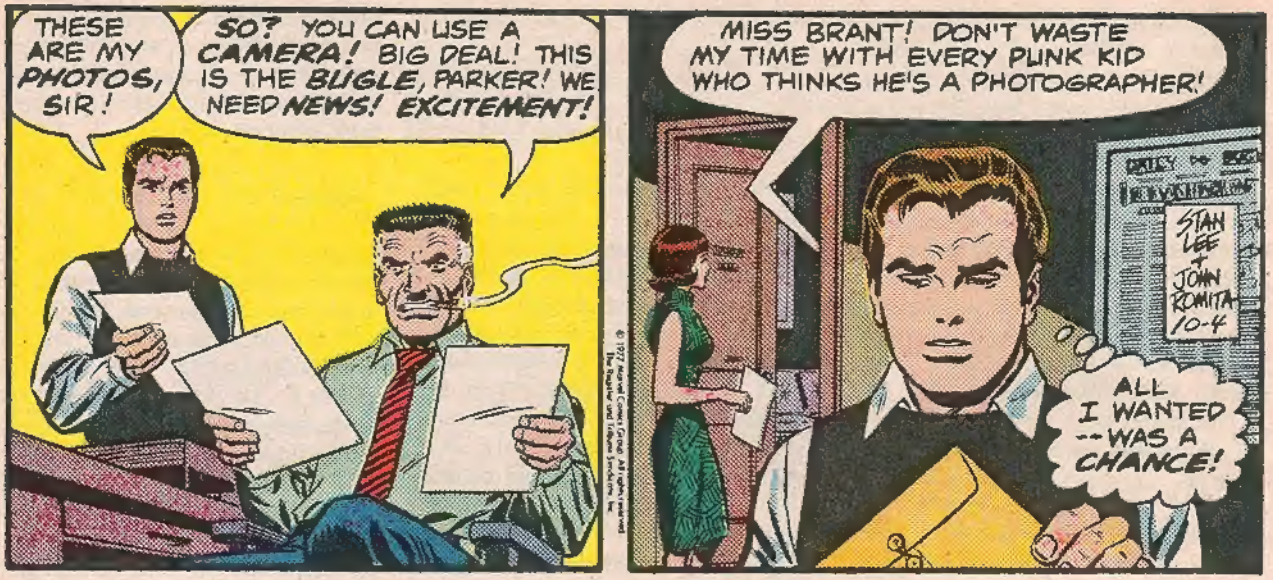
When we say that your art should be on Bristol board, *Name And Address Withheld*, we mean you should *draw* on Bristol board. It's perfectly okay to photocopy it onto normal paper, whatever's in the machine, but the surface you actually draw on should be Bristol board. Okay?

And, well, your idea about doing a whole comic book is ambitious, but unfortunately, we've got to say no. You see, we *want* to see that plot outline, we want to see the separate steps, that's how we can tell if it's good. However, do the comic anyway—you'll learn an awful lot! Then you can send the pages as art samples, and your friend can send his plot summary, and we can see 'em separately!

Dear Marvel,

I am very confused about THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. I am from Houston, Texas, and I get a newspaper called the Houston Chronicle. They have the SPIDER-MAN comic strip in it, but:

1. He never fights super-powered vil-


THESE ARE MY PHOTOS, SIR!
SO? YOU CAN USE A CAMERA! BIG DEAL! THIS IS THE BUGLE, PARKER! WE NEED NEWS! EXCITEMENT!
MISS BRANT! DON'T WASTE MY TIME WITH EVERY PUNK KID WHO THINKS HE'S A PHOTOGRAPHER!
STAN LEE + JOHN ROMITA 10-4
ALL I WANTED --WAS A CHANCE!

laine such as: **Doctor Octopus, Electro, Firelord**, or one of his oldest enemies, **the Kingpin**.

2. It showed nothing of him going to **the Beyonder's** SECRET WARS planet, or his black costume.

3. The most important thing in this newspaper is when **Mary Jane** finds out he is Spider-Man, she doesn't run away or anything. He just says he thinks they should get married.

Now this is some confusing stuff to me. I think you should explain what is going on here. I have every one of Spidey's comics from #248 on. Now, there is nothing in #257 (when Mary Jane finds out he's Spider-Man) on up that tells me, the reader, that he ever asked her to marry him. Please do something to show me I am not going crazy.

James Morris
1022 Claxton
Houston, TX 77087

Okay, James, explanation time. It's just too hard to make sure that everything in the Spidey strip meshes with everything in the comic books. There are lots of people who avidly collect all the books—but the strip doesn't run in their paper! And there are people who read Spidey in the paper, but never pick up a comic book! So it's almost like the "newspaper" Spidey and the "comics" Spidey are two separate characters—similar things happen to them (like Mary Jane finding out his secret ID), but in different ways. That's why you don't see references to the Secret Wars in the newspaper.

As for why Spidey doesn't fight many super-villains in the newspaper strip, well, he used to, at the start. But Stan found out that the newspaper strip game is a little different from the comic book game—what works in one doesn't necessarily cut it in the other. And super-villain battles, which look great on a big, open comic book page, full of flash and action, aren't the same in a newspaper strip. They take weeks to tell, and the stories slow down something fierce. So in the newspaper Spidey gets into the kind of stories that suit that medium best—intrigue and adventure and stuff like that—and we save the slam-bang action for the comic books, where it'll do the most good.

Dear People,

I didn't know where to send this letter, so I chose MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE. I'm writing about **Firestar**. I think she's great, and she should be a member of **the New Mutants** or **the X-Men**. I love the way you people ended the series. How I loved to see **the White Queen** get trounced!

Anyway, you folks can count this as a "yes" vote for Firestar's return, whenever that may be. Until Magneto starts using Grecian Formula, Make Mine Marvel.

Eben Rosenberger
21000 Lull St.
Canoga Park, CA 91304

Okay, that's another yes.

Dear Mr. Shooter,

My name is **Tyren R. Allen**, and I'm the president of Marvel's American Comics Critics. It is made up of kids (grownups can join) who read Marvel that write to the mags they read and give their evaluation of them.

This is not a joke! My friends and I have just started, so you may be getting some letters from us (MACC) now. We are hoping you print this in the Bullpen Bulletins or MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, so if any other readers would like to join us, they can write to:

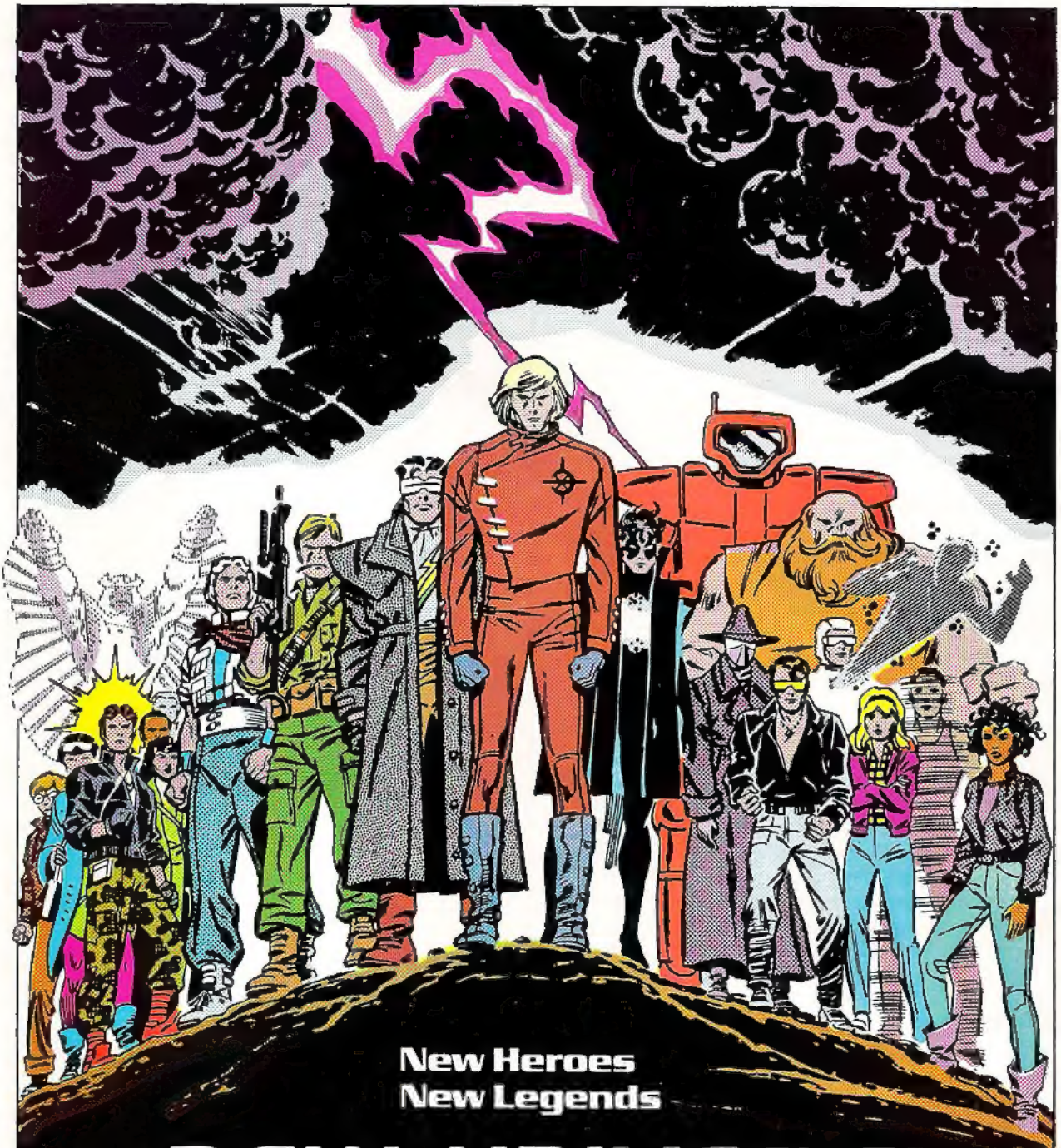
M.A.C.C.
c/o Tyren R. Allen
164 Palisades Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10701

My vice-president, **Donny Forbes**, and I would like to have more than fifty people in MACC. We are planning on holding polls about your Marvel mags also. So please print this letter so that we can begin the ideas we have and start criticizing (in a good [great] way) Marvel comics.

M.A.C.C.
c/o Tyren R. Allen
164 Palisades Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10701

Here it is in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, Tyren—your name and address is right here TWICE! If that doesn't get you some responses, well, we don't know what will! Let us know how it works out, like *Marisa* did.

And with that, we close down another edition of The Letters Page That Has More Names Than The Wasp Has Costumes. See you next month, when we'll have more stuff, more nonsense, and—of course—another Letter Of The Month!



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Psi-Force™
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New from Marvel Comics

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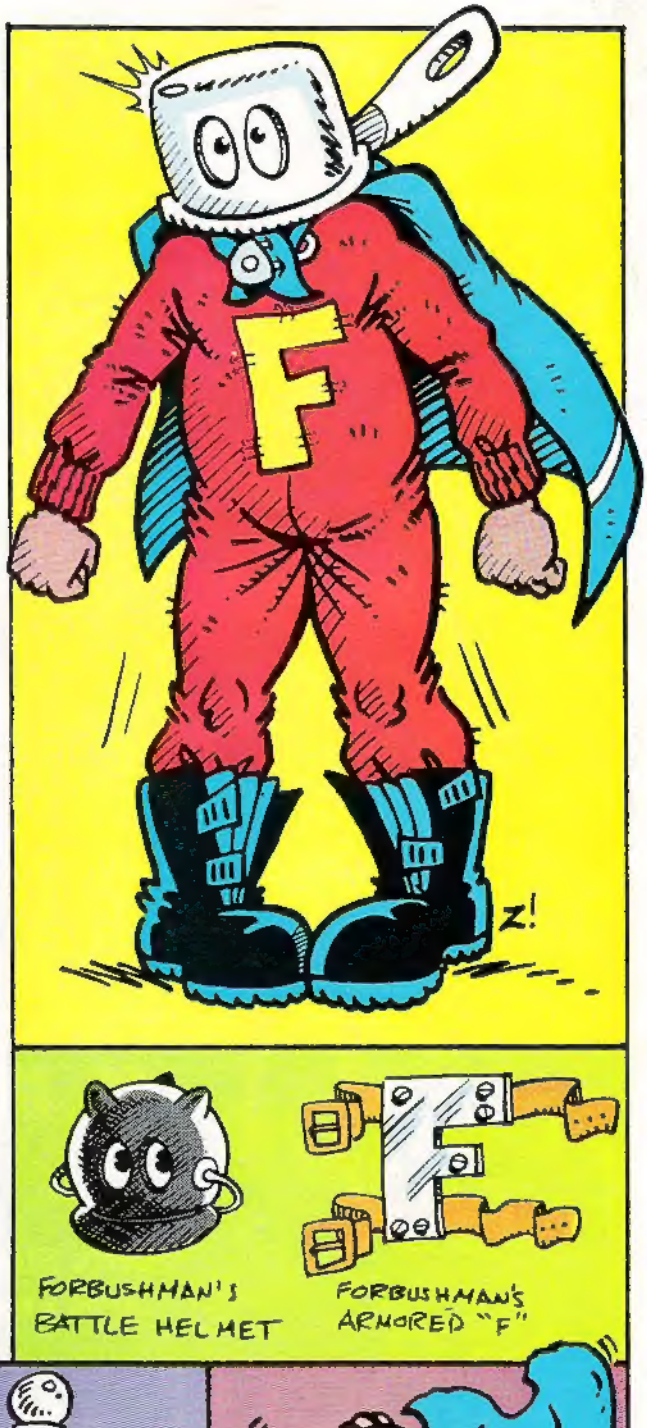
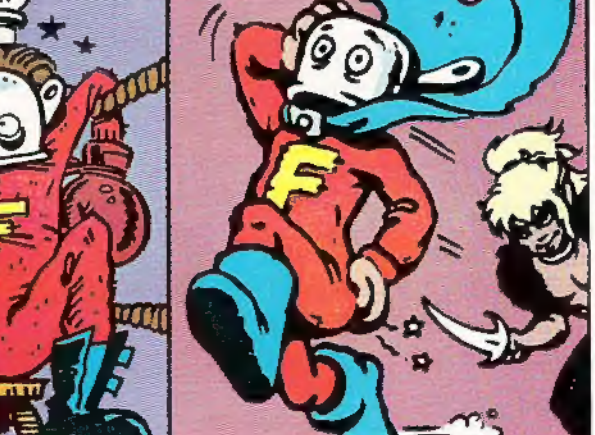
FORBUSH-MAN

Real Name: Irving ("Irv") Forbush
Occupation: Marble Comics employee and Way-Out Wonder
Legal status: Citizen of the United States with no legal record (But he does own a bootleg copy of the rare "Nobody Loves The Hulk" single!)
Identity: Publicly known (His super hero name may have been a give-away! He thinks his identity is secret, however!)
Place of birth: New York City, New York
Marital status: Are you kiddin'?
Known relatives: Mayhem (aunt), Benny (uncle)
Group affiliation: Card-carrying member of the Merry Marble Marching Society
Base of operations: Mobile
First appearance: Originally introduced as a mascot for the original CRAZY comic published in 1953 by Atlas Comics, (in current super hero form) NOT BRAND ECHH #1
Origin: NOT BRAND ECHH #5
History: Irving Forbush is a poor sap who labors away in a hidden room in the world-famous Marble Bullpen. Honest Irv does all the jobs at Mighty Marble that no one else has time to do—like everything! One day, after a frustrating evening of pursuing his one and only hobby—that of collecting super heroes' autographs—Irv returned to his home, which he shares with his lovable Auntie Mayhem. While Irving washed the dishes he expressed his admiration of super heroes to his kindly aunt, who, fed up with such nonsense, proceeded to dump a large pot of stew on Irving's head. It was this humble act which inspired honest Irv to become a super hero himself. He cut eyeholes in the pot, donned red woolen longjohns, a pair of galoshes, and a cape originally made from a potato sack, and called himself Forbush-Man! Despite his success at defeating quite a few super-villains, he has been refused membership in most super hero groups. (A rock band known as the Beatles did offer him membership, but he turned down their offer.)
Height: 5'
Weight: 98 lbs.
Eyes: Two
Hair: Yes
Strength level: About equal to that of Drew Barrymore
Known superhuman powers: Dumb luck.





Script: Jim Salicrup Art: Ron Zalme and Wendy Pini

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